April 4, 1980 #131

RAM

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IS THERE POP BEYOND TRASH?
Is there plastic beyond The Buggles?

Is there 'Money' in The Flying Lizards?

RAM CALLS THE WORLD
The Clash
Aerosmith
The Beat
Mike Batt

FRANK ZAPPA
Major interview

Lene Lovich
Skyhooks
Kevin Borich
Supertramp
Foreign Body
Elvis Costello
The Reels

LETTERS, PO BOX 746, DARLINGHURST, NSW 2010

They stormed their way from their beach-head, through the swamps, the pampas and the mountains, killing and burning as they went; Cortes and his lieutenants on the horses shipped from Spain, the long line of conquistadores stretched behind them, morions gleaming dully in the fierce sun. Eventually they came upon Montezuma in his capital of gold, and he and the whole mighty Aztec Empire went down before a handful of looting Europeans...with guns. While stripping the great pyramid temple, a soldier came across a series of scrolls which he showed to Father Sebastion.

OH BABE!

I was backtracking through old RAMs today when I stumble upon RAM 114 letter page. I notice in my stupor of drunkeness a letter from Babe Rainbow titled "Feel Your RAM". If this is the same Rainbow then I'll be very happy. It's hard to find beauty. Oh Babe, keep the glow on and divulge the answer cos I can't stand the taste of leftover wine.

Lots of love, the prize.

Eligible for Ecstatic Sloppy Drunk of the Week Award if sheet music supplied.

BEWARE, MALE CHAUVINISTS

Too much wanking does make you blind, doesn't it "Straight Forward Male Chauvinist"? (RAM letters 129)"...only men have the power to pound out a decent beat", you say. "Pound" is the operative word. "Pound" does not equal "talent" or "decent" does it? Stop hiding behind your "self-confessed male chauvinist" front, it's no excuse for ignorance. I bet you were the fuckwit who voted 10 million times for Led Zep in the RAM Rock Polls. Surely there's more to "good music" than brute strength.

1980 will see the emergence of many excellent women musicians/vocalists/performers/songwriters, women who aren't going to be stereotyped sex symbols or folkies - women are infiltrating bands because of their own personal talents, not as token back-up vocalists or just an object to lust after - but in *all* aspects of music. Observe, oh male chauvinist, by the end of this year there will be *many* excellent women musicians in *this* country and overseas, and you will be taken by your precious balls and beaten into submission. So there...

Julie A. Lert
Adelaide

BEWARE SOME MORE

No one with any idea of objectivity could allow Mr Chauvinist Pig's outrageously prejudiced statements to pass without comment. I second what you wrote at the end of his pompous palaver. Being an aspiring female singer-guitarist, I take an interest in what other women are doing in the rock scene and Sweet Jayne are one band I have always respected for their originality, integrity and good musicianship.

Over the past six months I have been to a lot of their gigs, and I have seen both drummers play. To say that men are stronger and therefore can "pound out a decent beat" is irrelevant. The overall effect with a man as Sweet Jayne's drummer is simply different, not necessarily better.

I object to the belligerent tone of Mr CP's letter, and he would do well to get his facts straight, before he starts manly ravings about the new-sound Sweet Jayne. The reason behind the change was, as far as I know, not because the girls felt insecure without a man in the band, but as a temporary measure to fill in while their original female drummer was out of action due to illness.

As a musician I have known both male and female drummers - good and bad ones of both sexes. To say that only men can play drums effectively is, in my experience, simply untrue.

Irritated Female Musician
South Melbourne, Vic.

DAUGHTER OF BEWARE

I think that the "straight forward male chauvinist" boor unhappily believes that, because he's got something between his ears, it qualifies as a brain.

Granted, some men play bigger and better mindless, over-loud, repetitive, anal-retentive, mother-complex, genitally fixated roll'n'roll (ie heavy metal) better than Sweet Jayne. But why extrapolate that those ladies are representative of all women rock musicians?

They strut and fluff and sing male groin rock in that pouty little girl way typical of male-identified women.

Check out Foreign Body (from Adelaide), Disco Flash (Melbourne), Crooked Straights (NSW) etc. etc. I've been drumming for quite a few bands in the last two years, and have never been accused of being "unable to pound out a decent beat". Quite the opposite in fact.

Any drum teacher will tell you that control of the beater rebound is more likely to produce a "fat, driving" sound than all the macho sweating and pounding in the world. And I've seen a depressing succession of male rock drummers who couldn't drive a nail straight, much less punch a song along. And there's been some great women's rock bands - all with more than competent drummers.

It's *people* who play drums, some good, some not so good.

Nina Bandarenko
Melbourne

There's been a big hostile reaction to S.F.M.C.. Check **Dirt** *and the* **Foreign Body** *article in this issue for more on rock women.*

BUY RECORDS, BUT DON'T DARE JUDGE THEM

I believe that you have made a great mistake in the set-up of your Rock Poll . Musicians, groups etc can only be judged by their peers, not by the masses who are unable to play a musical instrument or who aren't members of professional groups.

From looking at your poll's results, it's obvious that you don't go out and ask a hundred lead guitarists "who is the best lead guitarist in the world?", or a hundred drummers, bassists, keyboard players, rhythm guitarists, groups etc. who they thought the best performer in their category.

Which brings me to my point. I think you should retitle the categories "Most Popular" rather than "Best". It would not mislead as many people or enrage as many people as I've found since your poll was published. Please consider the suggestion and I shall be curious to see how you set up your poll next yer.

An Avid RAM Reader

The poll reflected the taste of **all** *reders who* **cared** *enough to vote, including professional musicians.*

BEST/LIKED

Led Zep fans will never die (let alone diehard), and when they only have 75¢ left they will know RAM will give more enjoyment than a bottle of detergent, and even then they will still vote for Led Zeppelin in the RAM Rock Poll because they are still the best there is.

As for you, Profressor Fripp, you can go take a running jump. Most people *like* groups because they feel their fave group has the best bloody guitar and the best bloody bass, so they vote for them. So what if Abba fans reckon Bjorn is the greatest axeman alive? To them he may be, and to Zeppelin fans Jimmy Page is the best o/s guitarist, so these people would not have topped the polls if they weren't thought to be the best.

All RAM readers have enough brains to know the difference between "best" and "most liked".

Henry Higgins
Canberra Grammar School

Hmmm.....maybe we should have a Players' Poll after all....

BON

In three months I could have seen him again. It shall never eventuate. It's difficult to perceive a non-existance.

I think it began with *Love Song* from *High Voltage*. An ignored Oz classic. Then followed by *Liveware* and *Squealer*. The Jigsaw almost entire, the release of *Let There Be Rock* left little doubt. A masterpiece of sound. One of technology's few wonders. Capable assistance as Bon belted out classics such as *Overdose, Whole Lotta Rosie* and the title track. Utopia can be reached. That, and The Saints' *Stranded* are the two greatest candidates for copulation soundtracks. Why did it have to end? There is much I don't understand. I hope you died happy, Ronald.

Love Jean

DOES THE BEAR BOOGIE?

I was watching *Nationwide* last Thursday and Nixon has banned Russian RAM buyers. I didn't know that the Russians read RAM. Do they? They don't. No, they can't, they can't read English. They do? How many roubles would a RAM cost? Russians don't even like rock. Do they? Are there any Russian rock groups? What is RAM called in Russian? RAMSKI? Romanoskavitch Auskonovski Magaskinovosk-ovitch, maybe. Huh? Tell me, tell me, PLEASE tell me?

SuperWASPski, Vic.

Ask Leon Berger about Russian Supergroups sometime. Meanwhile...Fear Not! We're smuggling RAMSKOVSKY in with the wheat.

RAMJAMSCAM

Where is your article about The Jam advertised on the front page of your issue number 129? It was one of the reasons why I bought the issue, and I've even checked to make sure no pages are missing. This looks like either a case of false advertising or a big "booboo" to me.

Leanne Mumford, certified rock junkie, NSW.

To err is human, to forgive divine. Hope you liked The Jam in RAM 131.

WOULD YOU KNOW ONE IF YOU READ IT?

Although some of the RAM articles exhibit excellent journalese, it would be of value to the Oz public to include material by musicologists. Surely there are persons of wit, with a knowledge of current musical invective, not to menshun style, verve, and a flair for kindly acid comment, available to write articles for this publication. I assume that such paragons (or would-be pedagogues?) are unavailable through obscurity or fiscal policy.

Take McMillan, one of your writers, for example. The material he turns out shows a distinct wit, a simple clarity about the emotional, lyrical intentions of rock'n'roll, but a blockheadedness (one assumes due to lack of formal music education) about the structure of songs, singles and albums. Not that he oversteps his experience, on the contrary, he omits in criticism.

O'Grady has an eloquent oratory about any general declamation to be made in terms of the policies of music, but then his observations are distinctly literary. Yeah, clearly the paper needs a commentary from the ranks of musicians, if anyone blase, literate and funny enough is to be found.

N. Murray, Gold Coast.

Few readers give a flying one whether Borich uses a Lydian Augmented over a Sharp II chord; nor, possibly does Kevin. And you lot reckon we use long words....

THE REAL IGGY

How dare the lead singer of Jimmy and The Boys call himself IGGY. We all know he is trying to cash in on that wonderful punk patriarch Iggy Pop. I don't believe the explanation that the name came from his old school, St. Ignatius, because his stage antics are watered down cover versions of Mr. Pop's. Why can't everyone be original, like me.?

Love from Gary Numan
At my mum's place

Iggy Jones was born and christened Ignatius Trappaga, while James Osterberg, who would later assume the stage name of Iggy Pop, was still at school. More examples of Nature Imitating Art in our forthcoming feature on Jimmy & The Boys.

COME IN PLEASE, JOHN HEINOUS

Qui est le Reverend Jean Odieux et les Vierges Rances?

I like to be kept informed of any potentially subversive and destructive elements that arise on the mainland.

The inhabitants here are free to enjoy an existence unblemished by the maculate and tainted society they so willingly abandoned.

This state of tranquil rapture, the feeling of simple ecstasy I, personally, rigorously and ruthlessly enforce; I will allow no one to blight my paradise - no sir, I will not permit it and I repeat my emphatic inquiry - Qui est le Reverend Jean Odieux et les Vierges Rances?!!

Agreez, monsieur, mes salutations distinguees,

Chief Inspector Anchovy
Flying Fish Squad
Christmas Island
Indian Ocean

The quest for the Great White Heinous and the Rancid Virgins continues, M'sieur Inspector, though it appears to be a legendary beast (rare species) who refuses to answer our pleas for an (ahem) in-depth interview.

ULTRAVOX!

Could you please supply some info on Ultravox!? Such as:

1. Have they broken up? (And if so, who are the respective band members playing with?)
2. What happened to Stevie Sheaves after the *Ha Ha Ha* and *Ultravox!* albums?
3. Have any further albums been released after *Systems Of Romance*? (If so, are they released in Oz?)
4. Has John Foxx released a solo album?

Ultravox! forever
South Hurstville, NSW

1. No - vocalist John Foxx has quit.
2. ?
3. No.
4. Yes - 'Metamatic'.
All this just off the top of the head, of course....

WHO FLEW OVER THE MUSOS' NEST?

Hi, my name is Fred Klemick. I'm a musician, and I also belong to a reform group called Citizens Commission for Human Rights (CCHR). What I need from you is any info you may have on musicians who have had psychiatric treatment, and how it has affected them musically. If you can send me any info, I'd greatly appreciate it.

Fred Klemick, Vic.

The purpose of CCHR is to "bring reform into the Mental Health Act", strange tales may be sent to Fred at 1/5 Finchley Court, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122.

"I can make little sense of these scrawlings, Miguel," said the priest. "But doubtless they speak of the vicious idolatry of these bloodthirsty heathen; perhaps this RAM was one of their chief gods. Burn them, along with all who fail to repudiate him for the True Faith."

D/RT

Bob Geldof, Kate Bush *and* **Paul McCartney** *clutch awards at last week's British Pop and Rock Awards. Kate Bush got 'Best Female Singer'. Macca won the 'Music Personality Award' (for promoting coach tours of Japan?) and Geldof was there to pick up the 'Best Single Award' for The Boomtown Rats' 'I Don't Like Mondays'. The Rats are now confirmed by promoter Barry Coburn for an Australasian tour in May/June. Their new single is 'Someone's Looking At You' from 'The Fine Art Of Surfacing' album.*

LOATHING AND LOONINESS IN THE BIG MAC.

One of the bodyguards at **Fleetwood Mac's** only media reception at Rouge's nitery in Sydney wore a badge that said, quite simply, "Why Are You Still Walking?" Some interviewers from radio and the press who approached the group for their five minutes of scheduled chat found the badge had a reason, when they were manhandled away from the area where **Mick Fleetwood, Stevie Nicks, Christine McVie** and **John McVie** were ensconsed (**Lindsey Buckingham** was a no-show). Mac were awarded triple platinum for the **Tusk** album and gold for the **Tusk** single.

They went on to perform 15 sell-out indoor concerts in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth, and an outdoor event in Adelaide.

At the first Sydney concert Christine McVie, while introducing *Oh Yeah* from the original Fleetwood Mac's repertoire, told the crowd that original Mac guitarist **Peter Green** had just moved to Perth with his wife and children. The vast majority of the audience (familiar only with the group's *Fleetwood Mac, Rumours* and *Tusk* sets) clearly did not recognise the name of the late '60s foremost English blues guitarist. Subsequently, a publicity director on the tour said Peter Green had *not* moved to Perth and there was "absolutely no explanation" for Christine's announcement. Fleetwood Mac were on stage during their concerts for up to two hours, with guest appearances from Stevie Nicks, in a variety of shawls and hairstyles. (pic: Bob King)

EX-AC/DC MANAGER DOES IT DE LUXE

Michael Browning, currently best known for his guiding role in AC/DC's successful push in Australia and overseas, has just announced the formation of *De Luxe Records*, in partnership with rock agency owner **Chris Murphy.** De Luxe will be distributed through RCA records and has already signed Sydney groups **The Numbers** and **In X S**, plus Perth band **The Dugites** and New Zealand group **Toy Love.** (See De Luxe supplement in this issue, pages 31-33).

TURMOIL ON POLICE TOUR

The Police's tour of Australia and New Zealand was thrown into near-chaos after vocalist **Sting** came down with a throat infection. The infection, which had apparently been incubating inside Sting for a fortnight before the group arrived in Australasia, came to the fore after the first Police concert in New Zealand. The Police did a second show which caused Sting to lose his voice altogether. Three New Zealand shows were cancelled and, by the time the singer arrived in Australia on March 6, he could talk only in a whisper. A Sydney throat specialist advised at least two weeks recuperation, warning that the singer's throat was "inflamed and spongy" and that any attempt at singing would cause the growth of nodules (hard spots of skin tissue inside the throat that cause excruciating pain). The first four Sydney shows (scheduled at the Capitol Theatre) were cancelled and then replaced with two Hordern Pavilion shows. A show in Brisbane was also rescheduled. Later, another Sydney show at the Hordern Pavilion was added after, according to a spokesperson for the promoters, Frontier Tours, ticket agencies were besieged with requests for returned tickets.

The extensive rescheduling of the Australian section of the world tour cause The Police to cancel concerts in Bangkok and Cairo. Their first date after the Australian leg is now Bombay on March 26.

The one bright light in the chaos was that Sydney fans who'd purchased standing room tickets for Capitol Theatre shows, ended up with seats at the Hordern Pavilion.

At The Police's only Australian press conference, held just before the group flew to Brampton Island for a week of sun and rest, guitarist **Andy Summers** admitted the band had probably been trying to do "too much in too short a time", and that constant touring over the past four months had often left the band no time to recuperate between hard gigs.

On their return from Brampton Island, The Police went into **Trafalgar Studios** in Sydney for a night of mixing and over-dubbing live tapes recorded during their world tour. The first concert, in Sydney found Sting husky, but singing powerfully, without evident strain. (pic: Moss)

GRAMMYS GO TO GOD

You saw the replay at night, but a select party of media moochers were invited to the plush Abbey Restaurant in Glebe, Sydney to see a live telecast of the American **Grammy Awards**, broadcast in Oz by the Ch. 7 Network. Special guests of the day were **Glenn Shorrock, Beeb Birtles** and manager **Glenn Wheatley** from the **Little River Band.** LRB had been nominated for **Best Pop Vocal Performance by A Duo, Group or Chorus** for *Lonesome Loser.* Only thing was, the Grammy Awards themselves were in such a muddle, the organisers ended up with approximately 15 minutes to whip through 15 major awards. The problem was solved by reeling through 12 of the awards in a matter of a minute or so, leaving enough time to present the major two awards - **Record Of The Year** and **Song Of The Year** - in proper fashion. Of course, the Best Pop Vocal Performance was one of the categories rushed through by a squinting **Debby Boone**, leaving the majority of the media unaware LRB's chance had come and gone. Only Shorrock, Birtles and Wheatley were alert enough to applaud the actual winners, **The Doobie Bros.** The real star of the Awards seemed to be God, who was thanked by the majority of winners, including a tuxedo-clad **Bob Dylan**. The Doobie Bros, also resplendent in tuxes, won a total of three awards, including Record and Song Of The Year. **Billy Joel**, who had the sense not to show, won Album Of The Year for *52nd Street*. Dylan won **Best Male Rock Performance** for *Gotta Serve Somebody*. He said he never expected to win, just like nearly all the other winners, a sassy **Rickie Lee Jones** being a welcome respite from all that humility.

AC/DC AFTER BON

The body of Bon Scott was cremated at a private ceremony in Perth on Saturday, March 1. The funeral was attended by Scott's parents, members of AC/DC, representatives from Alberts Record Company and Harry Vanda and George Young. Speculation concerning Scott's replacement in AC/DC came hard on the heels of news of his death. Ian Meldrum suggested Stevie Wright was a hot favourite for the position, an announcement hotly denied by Wright. Other names bandied about have been John Swan from Swannee, and his brother Jim Barnes from Cold Chisel. Managements of both brothers have denied either has been approached. A spokesman from Alberts Records said speculation on Scott's replacement at this stage was "inappropriate and premature". The band are currently in recess for a month while deciding how best to carry on without Bon.

IT'S DISGUSTING!

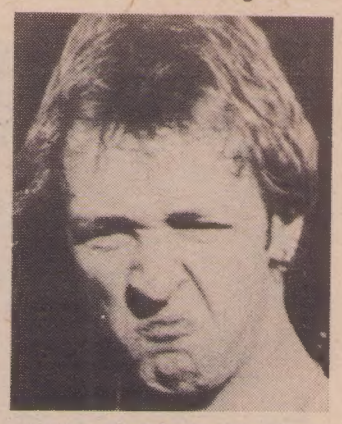
We apologise that available space in this issue does not enable us to print the results of our 'Most Disgusting Competition', launched in RAM No. 128, for Jimmy & The Boys. But Iggy Jones has judged the competition, winners will be getting their awards, and you can read all about it next ish.

One of the best kept secrets of the year, **Rolling Stones**' guitarist **Ronnie Wood** and his girlfriend **Jo Karslake** spent five days in jail on the Caribbean island of **St. Maarten.**

Wood, the former **Faces** guitarist who joined the Stones in '76, was arrested after police allegedly found cocaine at a party.

The authorities on St. Maarten deported Wood and his girlfriend after their five days in stir.

The first anyone knew about the incident was when Woody arrived back in Los Angeles.



In New York last week, Heavy Metal's new heroes, **Judas Priest**, paid $100,000 ramsom for the return of their new album. The album's master tapes were stolen from a New York studio a fortnight ago.

The band paid the ransom against the advice of the New York Police Dept. which reports that the kidnapping of album master tapes is on the increase.

All six canisters containing the tapes were returned though one was slightly damaged. Judas Priest have now returned to the studio, with a 24 hour guard, to re-record two tracks. *(pic: Halford)*

Billy Joel's new album, *Glasshouse*, swings away from ballads and hones in on hard rock, lending credence to his claims, a year ago, that he has more in common with punk rock than with cabaret.

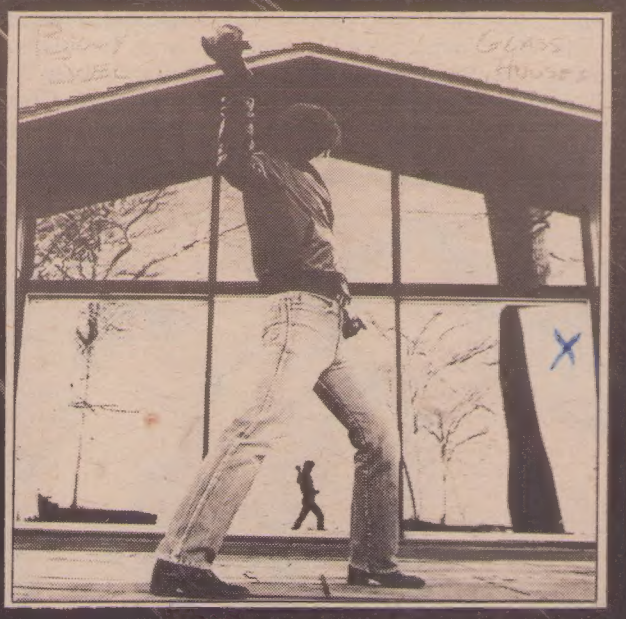
Bob Dylan observed popping into a store to buy an engagement ring, rumoured to be from him, to his backing vocalist **Debbie Grigson.**

There goes the honeymoon - **Phil Lynott** recently wed to **Caroline Crowther** (thus legalising the couple's year old child, **Sarah**) was busted two nights after the nuptials, when phuzz burst into his home and charged him with possession of cocaine and cannabis resin. He was remanded on bail until April 24.

BILLY JOEL

GLASS HOUSES

BILLY JOEL'S
rock 'n roll statement



featuring the single
You May Be Right

CBS

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D/RT 2

MI-SEX BUSTED IN TASMANIA. NZ POLICE BUST RUMOURED

Rumours following in the wake of **The Police** tour suggest that guitarist **Andy Summers** was busted in New Zealand for possession of a small amount of cannabis. The rumours state that, in lieu of an official charge, Summers was issued with a deportation order. Promoters behind The Police tour have refused to comment.

In Hobart last week, **Mi-Sex drummer Richard Hodgkinson** was arrested and charged with possession of a small amount of cannabis. The drug was discovered during a police raid on the band's hotel rooms.

The raid bears a strong similarity to the bust Sherbet took in Launceston a couple of years ago.

The Mi-Sex bust made headlines in New Zealand.

After an initial hearing in Hobart last Thursday morning, the case was adjourned until late June. The adjournment means Mi-Sex are able to carry out proposed tours of Europe and the United States without the worry of the effects of a conviction upon entry visas to those countries.

WHO WAS TO BLAME?

An investigation into the deaths of 11 people at **The Who**'s concert in Cincinnati last December has become an exercise in red tape and buck passing.

The concert's promoters and the management of the venue have failed to send representatives to court hearings concerning the tragedy. The Cincinnati City Council decided against trying to subpoena the promoters, after insurance brokers warned the council if the promoters were cleared, the council itself would have to accept responsibility and they weren't insured for it. The investigation has been shunted off into a sub-committee.

The Cincinnati incident has also inspired the drawing up of a 'black list' of groups to be circulated to promoters and venue owners around the country. The list, as devised by the security director at Madison Square Garden in New York, advises promoters that certain groups inspire audience reactions that could easily boil over into another tragedy. The list includes **Led Zeppelin, The Who, Kiss, Earth Wind & Fire** and **The Grateful Dead.**

Happy RAM/Mamiya Photo Comp winner Garth Boyd clutches over $1,300 worth of splendid Mamiya camera gear, while David Hailes (right) from Maxwell Photo Optics makes a brave face at losing the goodies, and RAM editor Anthony O'Grady (left) puffs reflectively on a fag. You feel a hankering to be where Garth is, meeting interesting people and collecting loot? So, start collecting your best shots now for the next RAM/Mamiya Photo Competition. (Pic: Wendy Adnam).

Little River Band are regrouping in May, in Melbourne, to record their next album. Already completed, a duo project between **Graham Gobles** and **Beeb Birtles.**

Peter Frampton believed to be negotiating to reform **Humble Pie** with old partner in heavy boogie, **Steve Marriott.**

Sting from **The Police** took a few hours off from the group's US tour to do a screen test for **Francis Ford Coppola,** the director of *Apocalypse Now*. Australia's first chance to see his thespian talents comes with the release of *Quadrophenia* in late April.

Vocalist **Chrissie Hynde** from **The Pretenders** had a night off last week, so she popped into the local pub for a drink. Feeling a little merry she started singing the band's current hit *Brass In Pocket* to herself.

The publican was less than enthused by her rendition and told her to sing the song properly or shut-up. The publican dropped a couple of bob into the juke box, punched the buttons for *Brass In Pocket* and told Ms Hynde *that's* how she should be singing the song.

Blondie's Debbie Harry and boyfriend **Chris Stein** believe in Health. They now refuse to use toothpaste with additives, have given up eating junk food and red meat. They now also insist on scheduling gigs so that they can be back at the hotel and in bed by 11.30pm.

While **John Paul Young** goes off the road after supporting the **Fleetwood Mac** tour, the **All Stars Band** have decided to hit the road as an independent unit. There's a chance they'll occasionally back **Steve Wright** as he hits the comeback trail.

Rick Nielsen from **Cheap Trick** went down a hot $250,000 when a heating system malfunctioned and burnt down a sizable portion of his pre-Victorian mansion in Illinois. Nielsen's collection of 40 vintage guitars escaped the blaze.

The Dugites, who used **Rumour** keyboardist **Bob Andrews** as producer on their first album, found it cost about the same to fly Andrews in from England, as it would to fly over a producer from Sydney to their stomping ground, Perth.

Jimmy & The Boys, still looking for a new bassist and guitarist, are nevertheless going ahead with plans to hit the road again in early April.

Can it be troo? Ever eligible gentleman of the world, **Bryan Ferry,** rumoured to be about to tie the marriage knot with **Charlotte Hambro,** daughter of the English peer **Lord Soames.**

It wasn't a good homecoming for **The Boomtown Rats** last week. They wanted to play Dublin, where it all started for them, but a local magistrate said no go, unless the band wanted to put up a mere $4 million insurance cover. The Rats took the case to the Irish High Court where they were turned down again.

The B-52's (who've just gone gold in Oz with their debut album) have been signed to star in a movie produced by **Paul Simon. Lou Reed** also stars as a record producer looking for a young group (The B-52's) with a hit sound...Also in films, **Peter Noone**, former heart-throb with **Herman's Hermits.** He'll be starring alongside ex-**Runaway Joan Jett.** And wishing they *were* in the movies are **10cc** and **Eric Stewart** who are just doing the soundtrack for a new flic by producer **Just Jaekin**, the man responsible for the *Emmanuelle* series of soft porn movies.

Gregg Allman (who?) and **Julie Bindas** (who?) got married last week and headed for a honeymoon in a rehabilitation centre for alcoholics.

Ooops!
In our last issue of RAM in the 'Oz Rock 'n' Roll' section of our feature article 'Rock 'n' Role Cinema', we inadvertedly omitted mention of *Oz*, Australia's greatest claim to fame in Rock Cinema. *Oz*, produced by Chris Fenn in 1976, featured music from **Ross Wilson** and **Jo Jo Zep**. It was a modern day version of the *Wizard Of Oz* story and was released in America.

Australia now has its own **Rock Against Racism** movement, in support of Aboriginal Land Rights and against police harassment of Aboriginals in city areas. First concert for RAR is at RMIT Storey Hall in Swanston St. Melbourne at 6.00pm on Sunday, March 30. Bands appearing are **Bam-Bu, Matchbox, Hard Times, Sweet Jayne** and **Mondo Rock.**

The Marionette Theatre of Australia has formed a bush and jug band to perform with their first 'adult Puppet Cabaret Show', *Captain Lazar and His Earthbound Circus.* **Robyn Archer** composed the songs for the band, which consists of **Terry Darmody, Sue Bradley, Andrew de Teliga** and **Peter Deane-Butcher.** The Sydney season of the show is from Wednesday March 19 to Saturday April 19, at the Opera House.

An American Christian band who, it's claimed, plays music somewhere between **AC/DC** and **Led Zeppelin**, and who have been banned from churches in America, are currently playing *free* concerts in Oz. That, anyway, is the story behind the tour of **Resurrection** who are now wizzing around Oz playing 13 concerts between March 15 and March 26. (*See National Tours.*)

B.B. King scheduled to tour Oz again in October, with a Sydney show tentatively scheduled for Oct.8. King's last tour of Australia was cut short when he collapsed on stage in Sydney from heat exhaustion. But he must be fit these days; the Australian tour is just part of a mammoth world-wide jaunt in 1980 that covers Ireland, England, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, South America, Japan, Singapore, the Philippines and Bangkok. During the American section of his world tour, B.B. King will be on the road with the **Marshall Tucker Band.**

New Sydney rock venue **The Rock Garden** now open at 153 William St. featuring hot new bands like **The Jukes** and **Popular Mechanics** in civilised surroundings.

A wild and wacky night at **Hernando's Hideaway** in Perth as various members of **The Sports** crawled on stage for a rousing jam with Perth musos, including **Dave Warner.** The crowd were shouted free booze from the door takings. The Sports, of course, are currently touring with **Split Enz** under the banner *Sporting True Colours*, with special guest keyboard player **Red Symons**, making his first rock appearance since exiting from **Skyhooks** in early '77. There are no plans at present for Symons to become a full-time member of Sports.

international tourists

Police
March
21 Sydney Hordern Pavilion
22 Sydney Hordern Pavilion
23 Sydney Hordern Pavilion
24 Brisbane Festival Hall
(Ticket holders for Capitol Theatre shows on March 6/7 go to Hordern Pav. on March 21. Tickets for March 8/9 are now for H.P. on March 22)

Resurrection Band
March
24 College of Ad. Ed. Newcastle Griffith Duncan Theatre
25 Christian Life Centre
26 Macquarie Uni, Behind Students Council

Sky
March
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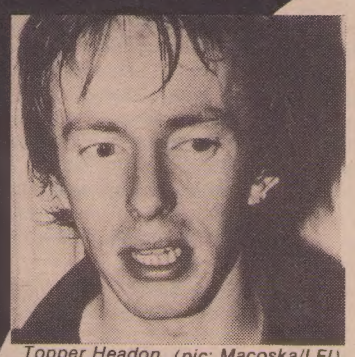
RAM calls the world

We don't know how it all started, but suddenly CBS Records in Oz were telling the RAM-staff (usually we have to rob the office pinball machine to place a local call) to phone the world. So we did.



Topper Headon. (pic: Macoska/LFI)

Phone 1

Australia Calling - The Clash

'You oughta say that our record company are a bunch of shits."

This is Topper Headon, drummer for The Clash, getting very annoyed over a 12,000 mile long distance phone link. The outburst comes just after he's been told that the band's new double album, *London Calling*, is being sold for $11.99 in Australia.

"That," says Topper, "is really *shit*. No, really, I'm pissed off about that. In England an' America it sells for the price of one album."

The Clash and their record company, CBS, often do not see eye to eye. In fact they rarely get close enough to see each other in any way at all, and The Clash have never been ones to hide the fact. They've written songs lambasting the company, stormed out of photo sessions with smiling executives, and if you look at the credits on *London Calling* you'll see a message. It says: "CBS — ///! !.", a barbed reference to their five-album contract. *London Calling* counted as only one album so the band could get it released at single-album price, an agreement apparently broken in Australia.

(*So what's happening here — have The Clash* **bin dun wrong** *in Oz? Ahem, it seems Topper doesn't have* **all** *the relevant fax at his disposal. According to CBS Oz-boss Paul Russell, the local price of $11.99 is actually* **lower** *than the English price of £5.00. And the Oz-price was agreed upon, insists Russell, between CBS* **and** *Clash representatives. So much for the price of English records. So much for Topper's grasp of fiscal affairs — ed*)

Be *that* as it may, and considering that Headon has just come off the stage after playing a gig where Ian Dury jammed on the encore, Topper is in very co-operative form. Ian Dury was a buzz, he says, but you should have seen it a few weeks ago — *Pete Townshend* got up and did four numbers with them.

"Really great geezer," approves Topper, "Might get him to produce one of our records."

You couldn't begin to imagine how strong Headon's cockney accent is — he makes Rick Parfitt sound like the Queen Mother. And if self-confidence is the only requirement for a long career in rock'n'roll, Topper will be playing drums till the day he keels over for good. Everything seems pretty much black-and-white to him. CBS may be a bunch of shits to Topper but on the other hand, their record producer Guy Stevens is "the most amazing person to ever walk the 'erff, probably.

"'E's like the British Phil Spector — best producer in the world, eezie."

And what bout *London Calling?*

"I fuckin' love it!" he nearly shouts down the line. "I fink it's fantastic, actually."

The band's support act on the tour is a Jamaican reggae DJ called Mikey Dread and the band have already recorded their new single — *Bank Robbing* — with him as producer.

"It's like a guest artist, knowarramean?" says Topper about their constant changing of producers. "Like, with Mikey, it don't sound like anyfing else we've ever done. Try for new sounds...you don't wanna stick to a formula. Like, probably a safe fing to do now would be let Guy produce our records for the next five years."

But the original idea of this phone link, seeing as how The Clash have finally cracked the Oz Top 40 with *London Calling*, is to talk about affairs closer to home. Like for instance, when are the band touring here, seeing as they've mentioned the possibility before, and were rumoured to be tentatively booked by one promoter for the first half of the year? The answer is not as promising as one would have hoped.

"We wanted to come to Australia before but we never really got around to it," he confesses. "We wanna *go*, but we've been so busy doin' so many fings. We should go over when we do Japan in August or September, do them in one."

Topper's knowledge of the Australian scene is not exactly devastating, either.

"Yeah, well, everybody in England finks it's like, geezers wiv' 'ats wiv corks 'anging off 'em going 'Pommie bastard' or 'Pommie poofter'," he agrees. "But I was talking to a mate o'mine, Ronnie Lane — you know 'im? He was in The Faces when they got slung out *(in the '60s that was - ed)*, but he said that even despite that, it was alright, knowarramean?"

What about Australian music?

"Lemme think...the *Spotes* are from Australia. Ah, anyone else you can thing of?"

Like many an acclaimed band, The Clash have become a fashionable target for critical backlashes in the last couple of years. Writers were quick to seize on the band's military chic as a false pose, but criticism holds no value for Topper.

"Agggh, they're all a buncha fucking idiots," he growls. "Anyone gonna fuckin' criticise me, I'll *chin 'em!*

"Nah, I know what you mean, yeah. But it ain't so military now. In 1976 it must have been a good idea, 'cos it's 1980 and we're still 'ere. Well I wasn't there than (*Topper joined in late '76*), so I'm talking on behalf of the boys really.

"We wear a lot of Brylcreem on our 'eads now. It's *style*. Yeah, knowarramean? Clothes! Dress up, look the part! If you looked like every other bleedin' sod in the world, who's gunna wanna fucking see you?!"

Some of the criticisms maintaing that The Clash had lowered the energy levels on their October '79 American tour are also scoffed at.

"Agghhhoooww, that's just a load of ol' bollocks! Just 'cos the songs don't go 'One Two Free Four' hundred-mile-a-fuckin'-hour. We're playin' better than ever. We're as good as...I mean, sure, we got a few more subtleties now, but if we didn't people'd be turning around saying 'Oh, you're boring.'

"We got the fuckin' record out now — two LPs for the price of one. No one's ever done that for the kids before. "The pride in his voice is unmistakeable and understandable. "And we can play every style, every style on the LP. We can play it all, an' we can play a good live show."

Half of this is bragging, the other half is the exuberance of someone who's been trying to prove for three years what a lost of reactionary old turkeys said would never happen — that a punk band could become something more than just a three-chord shout that would die away if we all left it alone. *London Calling* — like the latest albums by The Jam and Public Image Ltd — is the proof of how wrong a lot of people were.

The Clash's heavy work schedule doesn't let up this year — they make another crack at America shortly, another attempt at spreading the message.

"It's like 52 different countries there," says Topper. "Some of it's great, but some places like Minneapolis, were a right fucking pain in the bum, really. I mean, the radio over there is fucked and all their groups are fucked up, so there's no reason we can't steam over there and fuckin' *show* 'em all."

The clock o the wall is ticking very close to the end of our time limit.

I have to go, but not without getting a few parting words of wisdom.

"You write a lot of nice things about us," Topper advises. "Tell everyone in Australia we're gonna come out this year and they better be ready to fucking darrnce. 'Cos I tell you — it's gunna be pandemonium mate.

"This is the year — 1980."

If they get here, you're a fool if you don't go and see them.

Richard Guilliatt

Phone 2

Bringgg-Ringgg Who Dat? Oh, *Dat* Mike Batt!

Three factors should work in Mike Batt's favour when it comes to his latest solo album. Firstly, although *The Wombles* television series had a good run here, none of the accompanying singles and albums did big business, so people don't really remember Mike Batt as having anything to do with it (until now!). Secondly, the list of "...And Friends" used on the album should give it a boost in the credibility ratings. Thirdly, the most influential factor of all, CBS's mastery of promotional campaigns should put Mike Batt in the best-seller lists, as it did with previous successes - ELO's *Discovery*, Jeff Wayne's *War Of The Worlds* and Meat Loaf's *Bat Out Of Hell*. Not that the album doesn't deserve the hype it's going to get; it's a strong album with some excellent musical ideas, even if it may not be everyone's ideal way of exploring the concept of the Tarot.

Anyway, CBS think this album is worth investing a few bob in international phone calls to get the media ball rolling; so, a couple of Wednesday nights ago sees me frantically testing my recently purchased telephone mike. When I play the results back, all I hear is distorted hums and whines, but, with a bit of British ingenuity and a lot of painstaking memory recall, I managed to pick out the bulk of the interview. I started off with the inevitable question — what gave him the idea of doing an album based on the Tarot?

"Just a sec while I catch my breath — I've just run upstairs from the garden and it'll take a minute to slow down (*First piece of trivia — Mike Batt likes gardens!*). Where'd I get the idea from? From picking up a pack of Tarot cards about three yeas ago in a bookshop. I hadn't really known anything about them before that, but once I did, I got really involved in them. They're very interesting, fascinating things. The characters on the cards are all very strong personifications of different human qualities, and on a different level, they're just colourful and interesting. I started to collect them and learn more about them and once I got more knowledgeable about them, it seemed natural to write about them.

"I bought about 10 or 11 books on them which I read cover to cover, each with slightly conflicting views on what the cards meant, so I eventually decided to write the album from the impressions the cards gave me rather than go deeply into the meaning of each card. The biggest problem was whether to use all the cards or whether to stay with the 22 major arcana cards, which is what I decided to do in the end. Then it also seemed obvious that, as there were 22 cards, I ought to make a double album, doing 11 cards each album."

As it turned out, Batt stuck to doing just a single album and grouping cards together. Why the change?

"Mainly because I don't really like double albums; as a listener myself I find they're very hard listening, and you get so much material, it's inevitable you'll get padding on them. I wanted to make a tight, concise album. You know, something good in every groove. I know that sounds terribly cliche, but I wanted to utilise every bit of time on it properly. That's why I put cards together. It took ages and ages to get it sorted out, to decide how to put them together in a logical way. Eventually, I decided to keep the cards in the order they run in the pack, and whatever seemed natural I grouped, those that weren't I didn't."

The classcal feel of the album is a natural outcome of Mike Batt's years as an arranger, which saw him produce six budget albums of orchestration under The Mike Batt Orchestra banner in the early '70s. However, the Tarot album isn't just another exercise in bringing rock and classical music together, as he points out:

"That's been tried and tried a dozen times, there's no point in that.

"Where I think most of those so-called classical rock projects fall down is that their rhythm sections are so weak... I think I have got a really strong rhythm section down on this album."

The obvious comparison with what Batt has done here is with Alan Parsons' various studio album projects. It seems Batt hadn't heard anything of Parsons till people started mentioning him in reviews of Batt's previous solo LP, *Schizophonia*, which undeservedly disappeared without trace out here.

"I knew Alan to nod to, but, after the reviews, I bought his albums — *I Robot*

came out the same time as *Schizophonia* — and I noticed there is a similarity, probably because we're both producers making solo albums, but I thing we're worlds apart musically. I'm more of a composer/producer, if I may use so pompous a word. Production is a means to the end of getting the music on plastic for me, while Alan produces for the sake of producing."

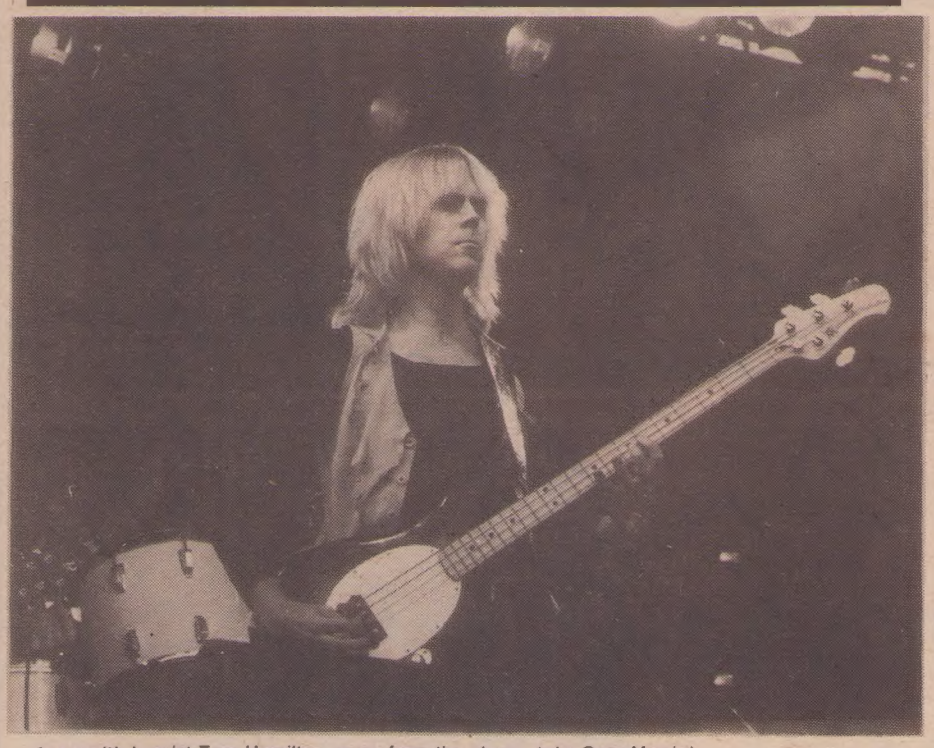
The *Tarot Suite* album is picking up rave reviews in England, though as Mike pointed out, reviews don't sell albums. It is still early days and the release of *Lady Of The Dawn*, which Mike himself sings, will be a better indicator of how the album will be received. But the spectre of *The Wombles* seems to be having less effect than it had on the reception of his last effort. If you didn't know, Mike was commissioned to do the soundtrack music for *The Wombles* TV series, and, although he got five Top Ten singles and platinum albums out of the association, the English music press found it hard to take him seriously after dressing up in a Womble suit and making himself a complete prat.

"To be honest, I think that will be a burden I will always have to bear. It's always going to be there. *The Wombles* was something I really enjoyed doing at the time, letting me play around with '30s style music and arrangements and generally having a lot of fun getting dressed up in a Womble costume and jumping about - it was a real release after all the serious work of the previous five or six years. Problem was that, at the time, the climate was very much cerebral rock and I went out on a limb doing what I did. Now, it's quite hip in the new wave to make funny little pop records and anyone trying to find serious musical forms of expression, which I hope I'm doing in a light-hearted, not too self-inflated way, is unfashionable. I don't mind being unfashionable - I've never been fashionable and I don't think I ever will be - but it makes it hard when you try to expand your horizons and people have stereotyped you. *The Wombles* was a kid's thing, for the famjly, and for them and for many of my peers in the music industry, what I was doing was quite a good thing. But the press couldn't handle me jumping about, so...I've got to bear that cross all my life. I'll always be Mike Batt, the ex-*Womble* person."

One thing for sure, Mike won't be going in to Batt for *The Wombles* again.

"I'm looking for another concept at the moment and I've got three or four ideas filed away. I tend to get ideas, kick 'em around and read books, sometimes spending a month or six weeks researching only to find I don't want to do it after all. In the meantime, I'm producing the next Hollies LP (*they've reformed*) and I've got three tracks down already. (*You read it here first folks, for what it's worth!*) They are thought of as simply another commercial band, though they are well respected, but they're the most musicianly, musically competent band I've ever worked with. Tony Hicks is one of the real whiz-kid guitar players."

Michael Smith



Aerosmith bassist Tom Hamilton, away from the phone. (pic: Gary Merrin)

Phone 3

Aerosmith vs. the trans-continental rut

For Aerosmith, the going has never been easy. And despite the critical and chart success in the US of their latest album,*Night In The Ruts*, they've still got another battle to fight.

Formed in 1970, Aerosmith built their reputation the hard way. With the flamboyant Jagger-lookalike Steve Tyler out front, they took to the road and nurtured an enviable following through years of exhausting touring. By 1975, they'd become the second biggest hard rock act in the United States, behind Alice Cooper. Their albums were assured of platinum status; not because of saturation radio airplay, but because of their gruelling touring schedules.

But over the past couple of years, Aerosmith's fortune have slumped quite considerably. Their last studio album, *Draw The Line*, saw the band retreading old ground and while their *Live Bootleg* elpee gave them some breathing space, it still left the band with their backs against the proverbial wall. Now, with the release of *Night In The Ruts*, they've managed to pull out of that dive. But they've still got lanother hurdle to leap - guitarist Joe Perry, as important a member as Tyler, left the band after *Ruts*.

Despite the magnitude of this latest set-back, Aerosmith are confident enough to embark on a world tour that will, hopefully, bring them to Australia later this year.

International phone interviews are something like whispers in the dark. Sometimes they work, sometimes they don't. Often, they'll come out with such disturbing clarity that you can distinguish every squeak in a chair fifty thousand miles away. And sometimes, they won't be so good. Satellite interference'll take over and you'll punch the play-back button on the tape recorder only to be greeted by an intense wall of grey noise that sounds alarmingly reminiscent of Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music* through a fuzz box.

And this, folks, was one of those.

Before founding Aerosmith in 1970, bassist Tom Hamilton was working with Joe Perry in The Jam Band, a small act playing around New Hampshire. Over the past ten years, he's kept a relatively low profile, both on stage and off. Now, he's stepping into the limelight.

So let's wander back a few months to the recording sessions for *Night In The Ruts*, the band's first album without veteran producer Jack Douglas at the helm, and their last with Joe Perry.

Recorded in a fortnight, *Night In The Ruts* was produced by Gary Lyons who replaced Douglas half-way through the sessions.

"We spent a couple of months working on pre-production," says Hamilton, "and to get the right sounds we wanted, we brought Jack in. He knows the band and was always heavily involved in the pre-production stages."

(Pre-production is often as important as the actual recording process when it comes to making an album. Generally the band goes into a rehearsal studio with the prospective producer - one of the few outside ears they'll take any notice of - and, under his guidance, they'll work on the songs, rearranging, rewriting and tightening them up for recording.)

"Joe was planning to leave at that stage anyway, so we made a concerted effort to get him as involved with the album as possible. We gave him a lot of control in the studio."

Perry ended up by co-writing five of the songs on *Night In The Ruts*, and obviously his talents as a songwriter and guitarist, not to mention his reported on stage charisma, will be missed.

"Ironically," says Hamilton, "he still decided to leave after the album - which is one of our best."

The band spent about four months working on pre-production, preparing new songs and re-working the older ones.

"A couple of songs, *Bone To Bone (Coney Island White Fish Boy)* and *Chiquita*, were written way back during the sessions for *Draw The Line*."

According to the blond bassist, "*Bone To Bone* on *Night In The Ruts* is virtually the same arrangement as the original. And parts of *Chiquita* are from a couple of songs we've had in the can for years."

After his replacement by Gary Lyons, Jack Douglas went on to produce The Joe Perry Project's debut album *Let The Music Do The Talking*. According to Hamilton, the introduction of Lyons had no influence on Perry's decision to leave. "No, he'd made up his mind ages before that."

Hamilton says he was surprised by Perry's decision to quit, although he accepts it. He says the band will miss him, but they've already settled on a replacement, Jimmy Cresbow, a New Yorker whose last major gig was a band called Flame.

On *Night In The Ruts*, Perry and rhythm guitarist Brad Whitford were supplemented by Richard Supa and Neil Thompson (the band's guitar roadie) who took over the guitars on *Mia*, vocalist Steve Tyler's only full writing credit.

Richard Supa, the mutual friend who recommended their new guitarist, also worked on *No Surprise*.

Hamilton says the band entered the studio with a backs-against-the-wall attitude. They felt the need for a critically receptive album as well as a commercial success, because although they've built a strong reputation as a touring act, critical acceptance has always eluded them.

At one stage, manager Dick Krebs was considering making a movie with the band, extending the villainous roles they had in *Sgt Pepper's* . Apparently those plans have been shelved for the moment so the band could concentrate on the album and get back on the road.

Of late, Aerosmith have cut back on their touring schedules. They feel that after years on the road, they can afford to spend a little more time at home. This year, though, they'll be back on the road, playing ten to fifteen thousand seat venues throughout the US before embarking on the world tour that, maybe, will see them doing their first Australian tour.

One thing Tom Hamilton hates about touring is the practice of throwing missiles at bands that gained popularity earlier in the year. He's had enough of that in the States where loyal fans like to hurl crackers on stage. "I've learned to keep my head up when I'm playing. It makes them a little easier to dodge."

Andrew McMillan

Phone 4

Moving to the drums of a different Beat

CBS were on the phone, offering an interview with The Beat. The Beat, I said, eyes lighting up. For, two weeks ago, The Beat (to me) meant the English bluebeat/ska/punky-reggae outfit with a blistering version of the Smokey Robinson standard, *Tracks Of My Tears*. A rude boy on the line to RAM. Yes please. Fine, said the CBS publicity person, we'll send you a cassette of the album. There was a giggle in the back of her throat that I couldn't explain, then.

And the cassette arrived. No *Tracks Of My Tears* on the song listing. Hmmmm. Put in on. *Rock'n'Roll Girl* - hard, jangling rock/pop, superb rising hookline. Not a trace of reggae. *I Don't Fit In* - mid-tempo, searing lead guitar, nicely snarled vocals. *Different Kind Of Girl* - real teen anthem stuff, cruising guitars, ricocheting lead, a beat that could probably get you across Sydney Harbour. Or San Francisco Bay. For *this* Beat are the Frisco/Los Angeles outfit who've just release a debut album, *The Beat*, recorded in just a few weeks with ex-Doors producer, Bruce Botnick. A hot, relatively new, US group whose influences range back to Lennon/McCartney but never Bob Marley. The taste test reveals absolutely no reggae flavour. These boys are gifted, white and pop. Only a cad would ask them to compare themselves to The Beat on the other side of the Atlantic, so I don't.

Paul Collins is the leader of The Beat. He's a fluent, energetic, polite, forthright talker. Sounds like he knows exactly what he's doing and is having a great time doing it. His rock'n'roll times started in '74, with a band called The Nerve. Before that he was ensconsed in the prestigious Juilliard School of Music; "a composition major, piano minor", he admits, before explaining when he split, he forgot everything he learnt there.

Schooldays may be over but you never stop learning.

"A couple of weeks ago," says Paul, "I was in a Canadian nightclub and over the PA came this really good R&B Australian group, The Elks. I see the new spirit of music as more than just a movement in just one country, it's a linking of hands across Europe, Canada, The States, England, Australia...all over. Tapes and independent records from new bands get from country to country, people are listening to new groups, new sounds these days. It's a good exchange, everyone learns."

It wasn't always like this.

"When I was starting to make my way back in '74, people didn't want to listen to anything new. If it sounded different from what was already on the charts, they didn't want to know. And this was right through, you know - the booking agents, the club owners, the record companies, and a lot of the people. "The people changed around first and slowly, everyone followed. If there's a new band doing something new the people in the business *want* to listen now. It will always be a struggle to win through, but the atmosphere is righter now than it's ever been. It's *receptive*."

Why, even the mid-West, where Paul Collins and the rest of The Beat are touring at the time of this call, is, according to Paul, relating to the band, "on an enthusiastic rock'n'roll level". And as most New Wave Power Pop outfits have found, the mid-West of America is the crunch point of America. You get your good press and record contracts in LA or New York but the mid-West is where the rock'n'roll heartbeat of America lives, goes to concerts and buys records. In the mid-West Heavy Metal is unchallenged ruler. "Once you get outside LA or San Francisco or New York," says Collins, "you're judged on a rock mainstream level. They don't like you to be too eclectic, they're not into hipsters, they're a different kind of people.

"But they relate to us on a straight out rock'n'roll level. We have good success in the mid-West." And you can hear the pleased smile in his voice.

What's in a name anyway - it's The Beat that counts.

Anthony O'Grady

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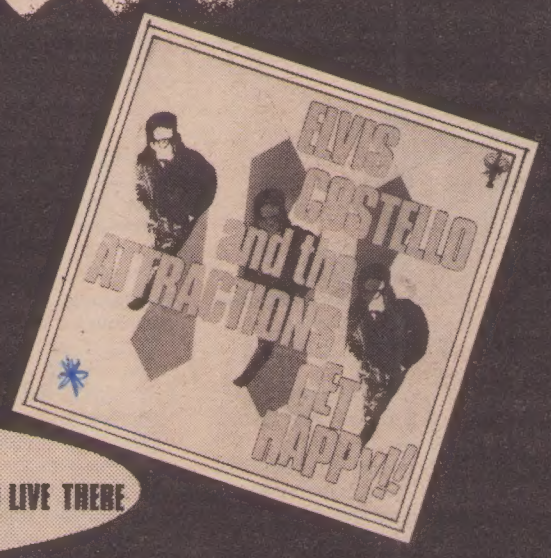

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Reels' singer David Mason explains how he learnt about sex-change operations in Dubbo. (pic: Mark Green)

THE REELS SWEAT IT OUT

More like a reptile house than a party..." commented one punter, mopping sweat from his brow. Obviously unimpressed by the launching party for The Reels' second single, *Pre-Fab Hearts*, dreamed up by Polygram Records. Journalists have been lifted five floors into the warrens of Sydney's United Sound Recording Studios and presented with colour co-ordinated drinks, food and band. The Reels' debut album cover and their stage costumes revolved around a garish red and yellow colour scheme - part mod, part in tribute to their reggae influences (green, red and yellow being the colours of the Jamaican flag) - so what else to serve the hungry/thirsty clientele, but Tequila Sunrises and hot dogs in bright yellow buns?

Of course, Polygram didn't plan on a heat wave, but the sweat dripping off the walls, and the hot, clammy atmosphere is appropriate for The Reels, a band whose music has been described as everything from fun and escapist, to hot/cold, sinister and manic.

Country boys, young and well educated, The Reels arrived in Sydney two years ago with a suitcase full of influences - reggae, new wave (particularly Devo), English pop, and even TV jingles. With much musical expertise they set about concocting their own unique style, which developed into an essentially rhythmic sound revolving around the interplay of staccato rhythms carried by vocals and drums, spliced with guitars and kinky sounding keyboards and featuring happy, but cynically tinted lyrics.

When Boomtown Rats manager Nigel Grainge saw the band on a visit to Australia, he thought he'd discovered the best thing since plastic, and attempted to sign them to his record label, Ensign. Grainge did win the band's publishing, but for UK and European release, The Reels signed to Polygram's newly formed label, Back Door Records.

The Reels' self-titled debut album was released in Australia in December and rapidly disappeared in the bog of Xmas releases. One of the poppiest of the album tracks, *Love Will Find A Way*, was lifted as a single and climbed to No. 24 on the Melbourne charts and disappeared everywhere else. While the single was fighting for survival, the band were busy playing on top of a bus around the Victorian coast beaches. Sydneysiders were reminded of their existence when the band's lead singer, David Mason accidentally scooped the headlines in Sydney's *Daily Mirror*. Mason's dad happens to be the head of the NSW Liberal Party, and when young Dave gave out with a few of his opinions (commonly shared by the majority of teenagers like *yes, I smoke marijuana*), the comments were treated as scandalous and horrifying. The publicity didn't improve The Reels' album's sales.

The reason for The Reels' lack of success lay partly in their production and partly in the music itself. *The Reels* captured the basic nerves of the band, but it failed to create shades or textures around those rhythms. Listening to the 14 tracks right through was a bit like experiencing a half hour bout of epilepsy as the songs drifted one into another.

Although The Reels are never ones to be swayed by commerciality - "we do what we do and *then* market it," says guitarist Craig Hooper - perhaps critical appraisals of the album have inspired plans to alter their sound. After this week's Sydney performances, The Reels will become a six piece band with the addition of (ex-Romantics) keyboardist, Karen Ansell. The band will be rehearsing, putting down some demos and hopefully recording a new single. According to Hooper, there are all-round radical changes afoot.

"We will be completely rethinking our stage presentation and writing some new songs. The sound on the album was two thirds light. We are hoping to achieve a slower, more powerful sound - more *texture* than rhythm orientated."

While they set about redefining themselves, *Pre-Fab Hearts* will be released in the UK and throughout Europe. It will be the first release for the Back Door label as well as the band's first release o/s. But The Reels aren't staying put to see how it goes.

"We don't want to stick to formulas. The 14 songs on the album were a kind of statement. They've been said. Now we want to move on and express other things."

So tonight is one of the last performances before the metamorphosis. The Reels move on to the stage and the audience moves sluggishly forward, but as the music begins it's impossible not to twitch, jiggle, then dance up and down. The set is short, but covers a vast array of topics. They play The Archies' *Sugar Sugar*, a song written by some aboriginals, a song about Dubbo and end with *Pre-Fab Hearts* which, Mason explains, is about a sex change reversal(?).

Perhaps more than any other band, the Reels' music deals with the modern Australian scene and its contradictions, fluctuations and changes. And suddenly, the fifth floor of United Sounds is more like a party than a reptile pit.

Miranda Brown

EVERY— ONE LOVES THE POLICE, 'CEPT ELVIS

Whenever Elvis Costello makes one of his fairly rare media appearances, it's always worth cocking an ear - not to say a cassette recorder - in the gent's direction. Last Friday fortnight he joined Kid Jensen on Radio 1's *Round Table* in London.

If ever the man gave up playing beat music, he should easily be able to find a job in radio.

What follows are as we say in the bizness, edited highlights. Over to you, El.

On The Specials in the States.
"I trust they're doing The Police in over there."

On The Police.
"I'm sorry. Somebody should clip Sting round the head and tell him to stop singing in that ridiculous Jamaican accent. They make great records, they can all play, they're all pretty and I can't stand 'em."

On Radar (Records).
"It's a very complicated - much too complicated - thing to really explain in detail. It's just we wanted our own identity. The Radar thing has ceased to have any credibility, in my opinion, and some other people didn't agree with us." *(Laughter.)*

On his new label, F-Beat.
"We're the Stax to 2-Tone's Motown."

On Bob Seger.
"This is the kind of music they make by the yard in America. He's nowhere near as good as John Hiatt - someone who actually sings about real things."

On Linda Ronstadt's treatment of two of his songs, 'Party Girl' and 'Talking In The Dark'.
"Sheer torture. Dreadful . . . It's a waste of vinyl . . ."

On the royalties that Ronstadt would earn for him.
"I'd rather give the money to Kampuchea." *(But he didn't say he would -ed.)*

IAN BIRCH

THE ULTRA-GROOVY NEW POLITICS OF LIBERATION - U.S. STYLE

So you thought the Me Decade was over? You probably hoped that the US-based mellow world of Perrier, Fiorucci, disco, hot tubs, jogging and total preoccupation with self had slunk quietly away with the last stroke of midnight on December 31, 1979.

Guess again, Jack.

The Me Decade has stopped being a sign of the times and turned itself into a fully blown movement. Rejoicing in the name Libertarian Party, the California style, laid back, self seeking hedonism of the cocaine and wholefood variety has embodied itself into a near coherent political philosophy. Much more to the point, it has copped some very big funding from sources who more usually bankroll the American lunatic right.

This is , at first, a little surprising. Their basic political platform is one of virtually unlimited individual freedom. They are against taxation, conscription, nuclear power, drug laws, marriage and censorship. They are in favour of legalised prostitution, gay rights, children's rights and non-interference by government in the lives of the regular Joe (or Joan). All in all, the Libertarians have grabbed the whole set of those utopian slogans which, a dozen years ago, the hippies were so sure were going to transform civilization as they knew it.

It's an unlikely set of campaign promises to encourage an oil billionaire to pour in large sums of money or to hike the Libertarian Party into third place in US popularity polls, the Democrats and the Republicans.

But it's happened. The money comes from an individual called Charles Koch, who has a personal oil and gas fortune worth an estimated $500 million and is currently pouring quite a bit of it, via a pet fondation called Cato Institution, into a slow but building Libertarian propaganda campaign.

The Party's showing in the US polls makes it clear that, although it has little chance of seizing power in the 1980 elections, it has sufficient support to demand to be taken seriously.

Before, however, you get carried away with the idea that the Libertarian Party may be the answer to the world's ills, you should know that there is a slightly less than rock candy mountain side to them.

The Libertarians are the avowed enemies of Godless communism, the welfare state, free education, socialised medicine, unemployment benefits and subsidised social services. They would virtually dismantle centralised government, withdraw from international politics and hand the control of defence, police and even the fire department to the control of giant corporations. (Can you imagine GMH being in control of the H bomb?) Even these services would be basically sold to those who could afford them and denied those who couldn't.

Beneath the glossy, oh-so-groovy exterior, the Libertarian Party draws much of its root inspiration from the works of Ayn Rand, the great advocate of total capitalism.

In *Capitalism And The Unknown Ideal,* Ayn Rand sets out a brutally competitive political system in which those who have what it takes to kick and gouge their way to the top of the economic heap survive and those who can't simply don't.

Both Ms Rand and the Libertarians seem to hold a view that runs something like "poverty is God's way of punishing the stupid".

The original support for the Libertarians came from Young Americans For Freedom, a youth-for-Nixon faction that became disillusioned by Tricky Dick's final antics.

Since then, under the leadership of their woman presidential hopeful, Tonie Nathan, they have attracted middle class don't-knows, drifting Liberals, nostalgic hippies, large chunks of the beautiful people, a scattering of rock artists, post-blank generation kids who'd like to have some sort of cause to justify their rebellion, and even the just plain addled (headed in this case by the ever ready Timothy Leary).

All seem to accept that the coke, the sports cars and the private pools belong to those who've got them, or those who can grab them. Those who can't or don't can go screw.

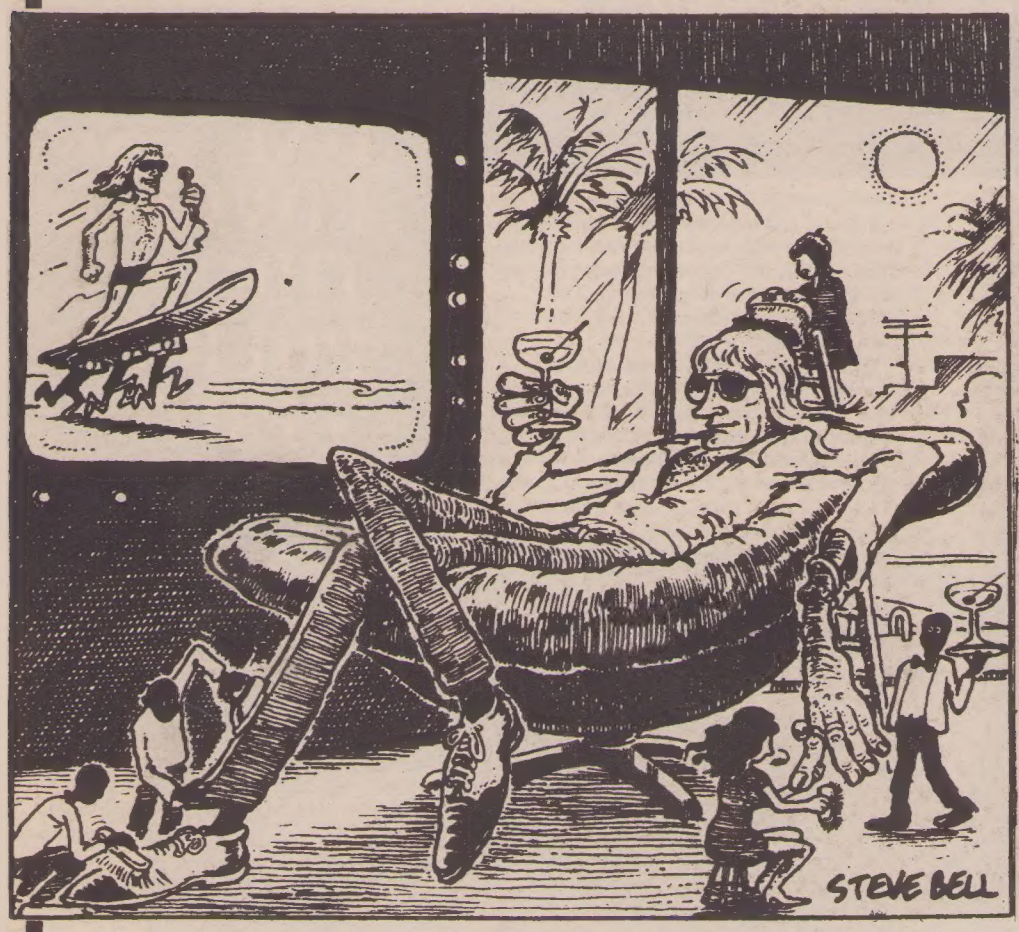
Or, to put it more politely, in the words of Von Hoffman of *The Washington Post* "...for the overtaxed, over-regulated over-burdened and under-powered millions of the American middle class, they (the Libertarians) are the only people worth voting for."

It would seem that what the Libertarians really represent is the counter attack by those who have it and want to keep it against those who don't and want a piece of it.

Unlike old fashioned fascism, Libertarianism has a chic, laid back style, and no millionfold skeletons in the cupboard. You can walk into their philosophy with a Donna Summer song on your lips and nothing in your heart.

Unfortunately, the Libertarians' narrow, West Coast philosophy sees the irredeemable have-nots as being most of the rest of the planet, you and me included.

Mick Farren



LIFE IS JUST A WRECKED JET

When the Wrecked Jets played at the Champion Hotel, it was perhaps the first time they'd ever faced more than 60 or 70 people.

It was, if at times a little ragged, still no less a joyous, intense performance. The Wrecked Jets are a celebration - an affirmation of life and love, untainted by artistic pretension or any kind of prejudices.

I'd seen the band a few times prior to this occasion, the first time purely by accident, mid-way through last year. It was then I realised that the Wrecked Jets weren't an entirely unknown quantity to me - I had seen them once before, some eight months earlier at a party in Carlton, when they were known as Brighton Lights.

"That was just this band with a different name, and different songs," singer/guitarist Mick McGinley told me when I spoke to him and guitarist Peter Tulloch, after the gig at the Champion. "We used to play the Sydenham Hotel, but we never drew more than 50 people."

The Wrecked Jets, as such, crystallized in early '79. Between then and now, according to McGinley, they've been "fiddling about a lot".

"We just needed someone to come along and give us a push," Tulloch said.

That someone arrived in the person of Adrian Ryan, a RAM contributor who chanced upon the band one night and was so impressed he offered them his services then and there, and has been rendering them ever since. It's due to his efforts that the Wrecked Jets have escaped off-the-beaten-track gigs, and are right now establishing themselves on Melbourne's regular rock'n'roll circuit.

The Wrecked Jets' forte is what is probably best described as pub rock - a roughly hewn sort of rock'n'soul not unlike Graham Parker's earlier work. Although pub rock is nothing new (especially in Melbourne, where bands like Secret Police and Paul Kelly's Dots continue the tradition), the Wrecked Jets inject it with a vitality that enables them to rise above the mire of lifeless mediocrity the label so often suggests.

The Jets' recipe for success is simple, and it comes down to two main ingredients — Mick McGinley's charisma, and the songs he and Tulloch write.

Quite simply, McGinley is one of the best stage performers ever. What makes him so good is the fact that he doesn't actually *perform*; rather, he projects his true self. Not a single move is calculated - his exuberance is barely disguised. This man is a STAR, no two ways about it.

McGinley's only reaction to praise like this is to modestly admit he does get "pretty excited" on stage. "I suppose if I didn't have this I'd be getting pretty depressed, sitting around doing nothing," he reasons.

As well as providing the Wrecked Jets with a riveting visual focus, McGinley also writes approximately half of the band's material. Peter Tulloch writes the other half, and as he says, "If the band did only my songs, it'd be shithouse, and if it did only Mick's songs, it'd be shithouse." The songs the two writers produce act as a foil to each other.

"I think my songs tend to be more conventional, "Tulloch says. His songs, like *Garage Music, Almost My Baby, Boys In Love, Face In The Crowd,* and *It's Not Getting Easier,* are tightly structured and full of infectious melodies and hooklines. They would, as McGinley suggests, "make good singles".

"His are more eccentric," Tulloch says, pointing towards McGinley. McGinley is amused at being considered eccentric, but his songs, like *Story Of My Life, Laugh It All Off, Just A Fool Such As I, The Hook,* and *When The Ticking Stops* are less disciplined, erratically structured, rambling narratives that, nevertheless possess a more distinctive character than Tulloch's songs.

"I suppose they're all kind of *rock songs*, rather than anything else," McGinley decides. "I'm not really interested in the future of music.

"I don't like much of this joke music - The B52's, and stuff like that. I just like plain guys - like, I always used to listen to Bob Dylan. (*The Jets include a version of 'Ballad Of A Thin Man' in their set.*) I like Bruce Springsteen, even Tom Waits. People accuse them of pretending, but it doesn't seem to matter to me, I still enjoy the *emotion* of it. There's nothing wrong with emotion.

"If if sit down and write a song I'm just not really concentrating on trying to create some new music. It just feels natural playing this way - 4/4 beats, and stuff like that, and sticking to the guitar sound."

They've recorded four songs, which may be released soon, but at the moment, they're happy just playing.

"I don't very often think about the future," McGinley says. "I usually just think about playing four nights a week...but I suppose I'd like to become a monstrous, great rock'n'roll star!"

Clinton Walker

Rip, The Stockings' lead singer.

THE STOCKINGS - SHEER DELIGHT

Halfway to The Stockings' final Perth gig before starting a six-week gig before starting on a six-week Eastern States tour, I suddenly have the urge to switch radio stations. And wonder of wonders! My ears catch the beginning of *Street Walking*, a foot-shuffling dose of razor sharp pop off The Stockings' 12" EP that's just too catchy for comfort.

While recovering from the shock of Perth radio actually playing some local product, I marvel at the song's instant charm, rammed home in just under four minutes by Bob Garter's breezy, rapid-fire guitar and a well muscled rhythm section as solid as you like.

The instant Australian pop artefact, methinks, as I drool over the thought of the next few hours being filled with the same.

The news of radio airplay is gleefully related to the band after a surprisingly luke-warm gig.

But the four members of the five-piece band assembled in bass player Lon Gerae's kitchen aren't exactly over the wall.

It transpires The Stockings didn't think Perth radio would pick up their EP for airplay.

"It's stupid for a Perth band to produce a record and expect airplay here," quoth Rip, the energetic Stockings lead singer.

"Radio programmers here won't play locally produced music," continues Rip, "but we were lucky because the music programmer of one particular station happened to like the EP."

That kind of deep-rooted cynicism is not unique to The Stockings. The Elks and Loaded Dice might tell a similar story with their albums.

This writer once heard a DJ play the Dice's single at about 2.00am and remark afterwards, "Who says we don't play local records?" At 2.00am?

But there was really no way they could avoid playing The Stockings' EP, which is, incidentally, five songs superbly produced by Lon Gerae.

Lon's uncluttered, super crisp production coupled with The Stockings' grasp of the contemporary pop song made it a winner that's avoided at your own peril.

But the band aren't satisfied that the songs on the EP pin down the essential live feel of The Stockings.

"The songs on the EP aren't really our most *up* numbers," says Bob, the lead guitarist. "We have others that we think catch the band at its best." I'll testify to that. It's a bloody shame that songs like *Write A Letter* or *Magneto* weren't included, because they zip along crazily and end with a *ker-thump*.

The band is thinking of heading back into the studio to produce another 12-incher, or possibly to re-press the first one.

Eastern States punters will have the pleasure (and believe me, it is) of hearing The Stockings play totally original material, a fact which suggests they've been working towards stamping an impression most other Perth bands have yet to make. "Our writing process is, ah, painful and slow which is the big reason why we haven't played totally originals in Perth yet," explains rhythm guitarist Frank Lee.

The Stockings have scored a few plum gigs as support to Midnight Oil and Flowers, and they'll be in there pushing those sleek, flint-hard pop songs.

Oh yeah, don't worry about the band's name. It's a throwback to the days when The Stockings were a semi-theatrical combo called Rip Torn and The Stocking.

I would have loved to ask drummer Fred A'Snare how he came by that beauty, but he was having a massage at the time.

Rick Southam

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CANNIBIS LEGALISATION CONFERENCE

Amsterdam is a beat city, an open city, a city of canals, a city of drugs. A longtime home of heretics from all over the world, it's a fitting place for the First International Cannabis Legalisation Conference. *(Australia was officially represented by Tony Parsons from the Cannabis Research Organisation - ed)*

The conference is being held in the Kosmos which, along with the Milky Way and the Paradiso, make up Amsterdam's Golden Triangle, free areas where hash smoking is tolerated without official interference.

From the very first morning it's clear that the electric clash produced by bringing together all the disparate people associated with the herb at one place and time will result in something akin to random madness holding sway for the next three days.

There's almost an incident on the first morning between a black reggae musician and a white American, reputedly an expert on the medical uses of marijuana. The rasta's sitting cooled out in a chair, dreadlocks concealed inside a large purple hat, music centre blaring dub. The stocky American with his red nylon windbreaker and briar pipe is playing pinball. Suddenly he turns: "Would you mind turning that off, it's really very annoying."

The gap between the cultures, between book learning and experienced lifestyle....

The conference is opened by a member of Holland's Stuf Vri Party. He tells us: "The submarine has surfaced. Welcome to the light."

Then comes one of the best energy charges of the weekend. Simon Vinkeroog, beat poet, long-time activist, speaks in a wordrush that comprises poetry and prison letters, quotes from Julian Beck, Herbert Marcuse and Ken Kesey. He tells us we are "victim accomplices" in a "war against hysteria". Throughout the conference he is there, interjecting sharp little phrases, always stimulating, always encouraging. His contribution is essential.

Downstairs, away from the speeches, there are two main spaces. One of these blossoms into a full-scale market of goods from all over the world; the other is where they sell food and drink. There are armchairs, palms, an ornamental pond and close-circuit TV relaying the speeches upstairs.

Later, I deliver my findings on the inconsistencies of the media coverage of the Paul McCartney case as my contribution to the Cannabis and the Media Workshop. Space does not allow a detailed rerun but it seems likely that the McCartney quote "I will never smoke marijuana again" was invented by newsmen who knew what their editors required.

Little reported was the fact that McCartney told Tony Robinson at Amsterdam airport: "I think we could decriminalise marijuana and I would like to see a really unbiased medical report on it. We're all on drugs - cigarettes, whisky and wild, wild women. The older generation make marijuana out to be some kind of terrible thing. I have been in jail for ten days but I didn't go crazy because I wasn't able to have marijuana. I can take it or leave it...Sometimes I prefer a drink."

After workshop, sensing a dangerous placid concensus of feeling amongst the delegates I spoke to Hidehiro Marui, lawyer for Japan's Clear Light Society. He represents Koh Akutagawa, founder of CLS, who was prevented from coming to the conference by the Japanese Foreign Ministry refusing him a passport. This was because, in 1977, Koh was indicted for growing 37 marijuana plants. He has been fighting the case ever since, and it has now reached its ninth hearing.

The case is being fought on the grounds that every Japanese has the right to "private happiness". Furthermore, he points out that the marijuana laws were imposed on Japan during the American Forces' occupation after the Second World War. Hundreds of experts have testified on Koh's behalf. Hidehiro says attitudes towards marijuana are changing in Japan, but the thinking of the judges is still "very old".

As for the McCartney case, he claims that the Government deliberately set out to bust him in order to demonstrate to young Japanese what the status quo felt on the subject, and to demonstrate to other Western bands who tour there, Japan being one of the world's largest music markets, that their entourage could be searched at any time.

It isn't until the second day that the haze clears and it becomes possible to begin to get a fix on what this conference is really all about. I am upstairs listening to a speaker when someone sidles up and whispers: "Direct action meeting now taking place downstairs." The subversives emerge.

I arrive to find some fifteen people grouped at a round table in earnest discussion, members of direct action herb groups from around the planet.

There are many problems under discussion, underpinned by a basic disagreement that separates the people in this room from the conference organisers. To these people, the Herb is part and parcel of a whole cultural liberation movement which can only be achieved through direct action. The second group want to separate the Herb out and make it legal through institutional means.

There is much talk of tactics.

There's an American scheme called Friday at Five whereby they encourage every herb smoker in the US to light up at the same time, at the symbolic end of the working week. The Italian says that in his country smoke-ins are legal but become illegal if you pass the joint.

There are plans for planting the herb in public parks, for international smoke-ins. A guy from Geneva invites everyone over in June to demonstrate outside various UN headquarters there. The Teepee woman says they are holding their Stonehenge festival around the same time when, as she explains, "we smoke canabis in stone circles."

An earnest Yippie American grower talks out forcefully about building up alternative sources of supply. He has already built up a considerable seed bank and there was a notable communication between him and the Jamaican brothers.

During one break I talk to two CAMP (Coalition For the Abolition of Marijuana Prohibition) women who add some local colour to the Snortergate Story. As they put it: "The reason why so many people hate Gregg Allman is that, after he shopped his friend, he went on to be more successful and people were going along to his concerts and cheering him like a hero." There was a look of disgust on her face. "We march on his concerts." There were other darker stories as well. Maybe one day those can go into print too.

The following morning I'm down at the hotel bar with the Jamaicans - Freddie Hinckley, a psychiatrist at the Belle Vue mental hospital and his colleague Dr Jackson, an immaculately dressed plastic surgeon.

Freddie believes it is important that the herb be legalised in Jamaica so that it can be sold as a cash crop world wide to help his country's dire balance of payments.

They talk about a new kind of OPEC, a partnership between the producing countries, free from interference from multinational corporations. Dr Jackson confirms that the herb situation has changed in Jamaica of late due to the Coptic Church. He angrily told me that, because the Church had bought up so much of the crop for export, that there was a local drought and the people had to smoke bush for weeks.

And the afternoon soon became a continuum of such conversations. Everyone had an interesting story to tell.

Take Zbigniew Thielle, a Polish psychiatrist. In Poland, it seems, marijuana is not used a great deal. However the country has 300,000 young opiate addicts who discovered that Polish farmers were growing opium poppies to use the seeds for poppy cakes. The addicts were soon at work slitting the pods, drying out the resin into a white powder, diluting it with water and injecting it intravenously. The only problem is that it's almost impossible to judge how strong the home grown opium is.

By his account Zbigniew is the only sympathetic doctor in Warsaw working with addicts. He says he hopes he will not suffer as a result of coming to the conference. Official permission was granted so he can just hope that nothing will happen in the future.

That night the conference ended in a ragged meeting with everyone grabbing the microphone to spout rhetoric. Next to me two Dutch dreads in immaculate full-length leather coats, one wearing a *Ruts* button, the other with *ZOMBIE* stencilled across his back, enthusiastically rolled joints and voted for every amendment. They seemed to have the right idea.

In retrospect it's hard to be sure it ever really happened. Certainly there is now an established international marijuana movement which is gaining strength and will make itself heard strongly in the months and years to come. The biggest high of the whole thing was just sitting in a room with so many people from so many nations, struggling, discussing, arguing, trying to work it out. It's difficult, so difficult but ultimately so worthwhile. It's the only way ahead.

Dick Tracy

(Australia has two active marijuana legalisation movements - The Cannabis Research Organisation, based in Melbourne, and the Marijuana Petition Organisation, based in Sydney - ed.)

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MAKING IT WITHOUT MEN

Half the human race is on the outside of rock'n'roll. Foreign Body, an all-woman band, wants in - GREG TAYLOR reports from the battlefield.

Foreign Body - l to r: Kim, Gill, Margaret, Shep & Natasha.

"I don't think you'll be able to see the band tonight," said the drummer. "Y'see - there's no men allowed."

This is the first time I've been told I can't do something because I'm the wrong sort of human being; it doesn't happen often to white males. Suddenly I'm an outsider, a victim of discrimination ...a foreign body. The band is merely respecting the policy of the venue (the Womens' Warehouse in the run- down Haymarket area) and I'm welcome at the other two Sydney gigs. But the message is clear: Foreign Body are a feminist band who aren't about to compromise their beliefs for publicity, or its implicit reward, commercial success.

What's also clear from the demo tapes is that Foreign Body write and play pretty good. In some circles this is almost as important as one's political stance, so I'm looking forward to the encounter as I wander up to Side F/X.

Drummer Margaret Dodd, bemusing her kit.

Side F/X is an old inner city school that has been occupied for over a year by a loose coalition of artists and action groups. An informal performance area...no stage, small chidren and dogs playing in the middle of the room, their elders and owners sipping wine round the walls. As the band take their places, they seem diffident about imposing on the party; they're also disconcerted by the absence of their regular horn player (sitting for Medicine exams back home in Adelaide) and the imminent collapse of Gill Turpin, the lead guitarist, who has contracted some lethal virus and has to sit on the drum riser now and again.

But Natasha, the big lead singer and rhythm guitarist, is here to rock'n'roll: it's onetwothreefour *Johnny B. Goode.* She and bass player Shep are holding it together - drummer Margaret Dodd seems to be having difficulty hearing the rest of the band, and though Gill slips in some nice licks and sings the occasional song, she'd obviously like to be able to slip away altogether and die in peace.

Despite the problems, the band gets things moving sufficiently by the end of the evening for the kids and canines to be joined by cavorting adults. Some of the original material has explicit feminist messages: *"We don't put up with men that abuse us/And you sure rate in that space/Don't mess with things that you have no right to/You're just a man - go find your own place" (Dancer In The Machinery); "And when you're in your forties, and struggling with the lies/Faced with compromise/You'll hold your dinner parties, but you're not convinced/You take your pills, but just enough and say/Good Night, Sweet Prince' (Prince Charming).* Others, including the driving *Fighting In The Family* and the haunting *All Night*, are personal rather than social explorations, and there's the odd flash of grim humour, as in the *Diet Song: "No, thanks, I'm on a diet - Excess age/What I mean is - if you want to eat, drink or fuck/Just keep it quiet."* The cover versions range from fairly routine renderings of *Jumping Jack Flash, Hanging On The Telephone* and *Gloria*, to more interesting treatments of *Walk On The Wild Side*, Randy Newman's *Baltimore* (via Nina Simone) and Split Enz' *Nice To Know.*

Not a great gig, but we've definitely got an all-woman band who rock; and it's all-woman for quite different reasons than the usual tits'n'arse commercial gimmick. Rock, like the rest of our civilisation, has always been dominated by men: women are allowed to stand out front and sing and look pretty, and gradually a few are succeeding as keyboard players, bass players and rhythm guitarists. But how many female drummers, horn or lead guitar players have you ever seen? Isn't it great that half the human race may be just starting to join in the music?

Honestly, you should have seen her, the girl from the band who brought in the photos - talk about *rough...*" "She had such hairy legs..." "Why don't they dress attractively?" "What is it - a dyke band or something?" That's *girls* talking about a casual glimpse of Foreign Body; guys' comments run to gems like, "I wonder if it'll be safe to take my girlfriend along, ho ho ho." Isn't it great that Australia understands the importance of women's music?

Perhaps Foreign Body could bypass this sort of superficial reaction if they played down the liberation aspect; but why should they? They wear the same sort of things - jeans, shorts, overalls, t-shirts, denim jackets - as lots of male musos: these are the practical and comfortable clothes if you're driving long distances and moving gear. Nobody goes around sneering about sexual preferences if the band is all-male - but people are asking me, "Are they all on together, or what?" It's enough to make a feller a feminist.

"Men who say they have feminist politics do so either because they haven't any direction of their own, or else just as a wank," says Gill sternly as we sit talking in the garden of the house where the band is staying. I quickly wipe off the sympathetic look, and switch to some neutral subject, like guitar playing. "I taught myself to play by working it all out on paper. I found out what notes were relevant to what chords - a woman who played violin showed me. It's taken me five years; and there's still a hell of a lot I don't know..." This self-taught approach has resulted in a fairly unique playing style: she plays left-handed with the guitar strung upside down, and uses only single note lines - no chords. But good notes, economically and tastefully placed. "I'm really careful not to make mistakes. I listen to lead players in lots of male bands - and they made *acres* of mistakes - they've got all these gadgets, and they're screaming away, pulling themselves off on stage... But if I make mistakes, I'm aware of getting weird looks from the floor - they're really watching you to see you make a fool of yourself."

Gill and Shep are the only two who've played in other bands, Shep switching from guitar to bass when Foreign Body was formed 15 months ago. Red hair, lean brown face, a quick smile; she's on leave from her social worker job. "I might leave it for a while if the band is really happening, but I'd probably go back. I like the kids."

Beside her, curled sleepily in a deck chair, is Kim Laburn, just off the plane from Adelaide. With 18 months to go before she qualifies as a doctor, she faces the hardest choice if the band's burgeoning reputation demands more travelling. She's studied classical flute for years and years, but picked up sax only after joining the group. Like most of the band, she has a very independent attitude towards learning an instrument. "I don't really listen to other horn players...In fact, a lot of the music we do I'd never *listen* to - but it's great fun to play."

Margaret is on leave from her full-time job of being a mother. It's hard to believe the slim lady perched on the garden wall has a 15 year old son, and an eight year old daughter. Drumming is a very recent interest, but she's no stranger to combining family life with other creative enterprises, like film making, and making the pages of *Time* Magazine with her work in ceramics. Her playing is a bit light handed for traditional rock ("Some reviewer wrote that I 'pat the drums like a pet'," she says drily), using the cymbals far more than the snare. Maybe just inexperience; or maybe an instinctively different, feminine approach to drumming.

The band's strongest member is also the youngest. Natasha, a fervent Joni Mitchell admirer, has been singing and playing for 12 years. A confident, rocking guitarist and expressive singer, she also writes much of the material, and works out the arrangements of the covers. Barely 20, she hasn't formed any commitments other than music. I ask her whether she'd consider playing in a band with men, if offered good music and a reasonable livelihood. (Foreign Body only cover expenses at present). She looks away from us all, across the river, and says: "I'd consider it - but it doesn't mean I'd do it. Foreign Body is what's happening now."

And it's happening tonight down at the Native Rose Hotel. Pep, the sound-person, has a better PA to play with, Kim is here, Gill has recovered somewhat and is leaping about. The beer garden is packed (boys outnumbered 20 to one - fantastic!) and enthusiastic... In fact, by the last set everything's so exuberant the PA blows up.

Foreign Body is a band with a purpose: to show the world, and particularly the female half of the rock'n'roll world that women can rock on their own terms. It's a hard road - on the one hand, prejudice against the very idea, and on the other, patronising sympathy. ("They sound alright...for chicks.") They react with vigorous independence - "I'm more interested in playing together and finding our own directions than in listening to other people's," says Margaret - which is a strength in one way, but a trap in another, if it prevents learning short-cuts to musical skills.

But wothehell...you can dance to them right now. Foreign Body work regularly in Adelaide and are coming East again in May. Margaret reckons that "If the media gave people permission to like women's bands, they would." Consider yourself permitted.

Gill and Natasha letting it rip.

Sax player Kim Laburn, a classically trained flautist, occasionally reverts.

Kim smiling on lead guitarist Gill Turpin's concentration. (all pix: Corrie Ancone)

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SUPERSTAR BORES

(Part 4,967 of a continuing series that started and flourished in the '70s)

Supertrampersons: Rick Davies

Roger Hodgson

Dougie Thompson

John Helliwell (all pix: Paul Canty/LFI)

If you're a fabulously successful and rich band like SUPERTRAMP you not only make the rules, you can take your own ballgame and park (not to mention kids and the rest of the family organisation) around the world with you. But what really counts is cosmic empathy, right?
by GAVIN MARTIN

Supertramp are as popular in Portugal as they are almost anywhere else on the continent. The band will play two dates at a large indoor stadium in Cascais, a city some 25-30 miles from Lisbon, performing to an audience of 8,000 each night. The first performance will be celebrated by the presentation of some gold discs to the band courtesy of A&M Portugal; it is also their first ever Portuguese performance.

My purpose in coming to Cascais is to see the Supertramp family (a term favoured by the band's official circular and as good a way as any to describe the massive organisation) in action on and off stage, to talk with the band about their music, its implications and relevance for themselves and their listeners, to unravel the intricacies of the process behind the end products (live shows and vinyl) which they produce.

I *haven't* come to bury Supertramp: they're a band who've always interested me, especially in the light of their enduring success, worldwide as well as in Europe, where they seem to have a bigger following than almost any band you care to mention. I've come to jab and jibe, taunt and tease, to engage in a conversation of two varying perspectives. Being more used to working with rock'n'roll at its most basic grass roots level, I'm obviously interested to find out what effect Supertramp have felt during the recent years' rock 'revolution'.

But what appears to be a fertile prospect will, over the 2½-day stay, crumble into a quagmire of exasperation, depression and negativity. I become the fall guy for spoilt superstar antics, charades and facades enacted to keep the Supertramp fantasy intact.

The whole project gets off on the wrong foot when we arrive at the hotel on the afternoon of the first gig to discover that the band aren't even staying there. It transpires that multi-instrumentalist John Helliwell and bassist Dougie Thompson *are* there but under pseudonyms. Fine, but as permission for the interview will later be withdrawn on the grounds that insufficient *empathy* exists between myself and Supertramp, it hardly seems as if they were doing their best to encourage this *empathy*.

Charles Provost is the slightly overweight and carelessly bearded Canadian half of the Supertramp management. Inside the venue he greets me with firm sincerity and mild enthusiasm. But the warmth of his initial salutation will steadily dwindle with each encounter during my stay until the last time I see Charlie we walk past one another as if in parallel universes. Charlie likes to decorate his tour jacket with an assortment of badges, one of which I find hysterically hypocritical. It's inscribed *Question Authority*.

Filling me in on a few details, Charlie unveils problem number two. Rick Davies, an essential half of Supertramp's songwriting partnership, will not under any circumstances talk to me. Provost qualifies Davies' reluctance by claiming he is suffering from tour fatigue to the extent that he wouldn't be up to giving a satisfactory interview. Talk behind the scenes sees Rick emerging as something of a recluse, reluctant to do the tour and deliberately remaining something of an enigma.

Mulling over a plate of potatoes, cabbage and nut roast, I'm introduced to the band's Scottish bassist Dougie Thompson, an agreeably cocky Celtic character who, sympathetic to the toils of a long day's travel, agrees to do the interview the following evening. Our ineffectual banter wavers between personal and business matters. Yes, all the members of the band are married and the proliferation of offspring presently scurrying around the dressing room is explained by the fact that at this stage of the tour the band's kin and kinfolk are travelling hand in hand and the Supertramp family is at its capacity.

With no record player, Dougie gets very little opportunity to listen to much music but he does like a few tracks on the new Police album (him, Keef and Ted Nugent - we *must* be twigging something here). The band have not taken up permanent residence in America but it seems like a logical resting point for the present. They still have British citizenship and plan to keep it.

Back at the hotel there's a reception of quite breathtaking lavishness. Culinary delights and delicacies mingle with an abundance of choice Portuguese beverages. As the reception runs its typically boring and self-congratulatory course I find refuge in sinking deeper and deeper into a wine glass. Members of the entourage eventually relieve the tedium with a disgusting display of rock'n'roll decadence. All manner of exquisitely prepared food is strewn around the room and ground into the carpet. It's left for a group of Portuguese women to clear up the abuse of supplies *they'd* be hard pushed to afford.

Roger Hodgson is engaged in a post-dinner tete-a-tete with Provost. Glancing over, Provost's eyes meet my own and a faint suggestion of wariness flashes across his face. Thinking nothing of it, I approach Roger to confirm our interview; his reply and our subsequent exchange leads me to believe that I had been the subject of their dialogue.

"I've been thinking about this, and I don't think there's sufficient empathy between us to do an interview," he says, to my complete amazement.

He's perturbed by a casual remark made earlier to Charlie. When asking how familiar I was with the band's work I'd told him I'd become very familiar with it in the past few weeks. Taken at face value, a true enough statement - but quite misleading in that it did not reveal the hours spent tackling the content of *Crime* when it was originally released. Belying the frivolity of *Dreamer*, the rest of the album was made of sturdier stuff - and quite unique for the period in which it was released, a hefty slab of the album dealt with topics not all that far removed from those later to receive a widespread airing in the punk epoch: social disaffection and disillusionment, the British school system and the alienation of the small man in the face of all-powerful bureaucracy.

The *Crisis What Crisis?* album on the other hand held nowhere near the same clout or refreshing individualism, and I was disheartened to see an almost blatant dilution of formula at work. Finding more invigorating listening elsewhere during the last few years, S'tramp haven't occupied the bulk of my listening time. When the tour trip was agreed to, however, I sorted through memories and neglected albums, devoting a full two weeks to coming to terms with the strange Supertramp beast once more. Hence my remark to Provost the previous evening - the root of Roger Hodgson's sudden volte-face.

Sensing that perhaps Roger is edging away from the possibility of a frictional confrontation, I ask if he thinks that the person who conducts the interview should be a S'tramp aficionado. No, says Hodgson, and colours his explanation with a burlesque ritual which, despite his politeness, I find on reflection to be condescending and insulting. Using his hand as a kind of transcendental carrier pidgeon travelling between his forehead and mine, he says: "I don't think I can communicate what's up here to what's up there."

"But it only has to go down here," I reason, pointing to my cassette player.

"No," squeals Hodgson, "what's important is what goes on up here" (*hand rising to our respective craniums once more).* "What goes down there is bullshit."

Is this some sort of spiritual thing, Roger?

"Almost," he replies.

Hyper-sensitivity and overt caution blinds the Supertramp organisation to the fact that is has become everything they feared from me: bigoted, dogmatic and unco-operative. It's sadly indicative of the slide into superficialities and irrelevance of a band who once displayed a cogent grasp on reality.

They now refuse to make any concessions to prevailing circumstances and conditions. Their show, a spectacle of almost overwhelming profesionalism, is so obsessed with style that little else seems to register. The grandure and entrancing completeness of the venture leaves no room for the audience to manoeuvre or act on inpulse. The Supertramp live show slavishly works to the required perfection of its form and somewhere the (admittedly flimsy) thread of its content is buried under a morass of theatrics and cinematics.

Only by taking into account the world around them can they possibly hope to flourish and retain a sense of validity. The songs still strive to be something more than mere 'entertainment', from the plaintive soul-searching of *Could you please, please tell me what we've learned/I know it sounds absurd but please tell me who I am* to the frantic imploration of *Fool's Overture - Live it up, rip it up, why so lazy?/Give it out, dish it/Let's go crazy, yeah!!* - yet cocooned in their 'family' they float further and further away from reality and render their oft-expressed desire for social change worthless.

Their appeal is based on trivialising and generalising in three broad areas: rock-as-art-with-a-hammer-in-its- clutch, with lots of effacing polemics and sweeping social statements; rock-as-home-hi-fi-and-coffee-table-companion, smooth shining textures blending with the false smiles, the idle chat and the Axminster carpet; and *disco* - a strain most noticeably nutured on *Breakfast in America,* with its stilted rhythms, mawkish sax and keyboards deployment.

Their music is so anxious to take its place that it tumbles, trips and falls over itself as it attempts to do so. A music of purely one dimension - the music of Supertramp is the music of Supertramp is the . . .and behind it lies - NOTHING! Lick that sickly sweet candystick but don't chew or you'll bite your tongue, suckers.

When I returned home from Portugal I had a dream: the entire Supertramp crew (the band have a total travelling cavalcade of lightspersons, soundspersons and caterers as well as the wives and kiddies) were chanting with almost Kop-like resonance: "The winner of the game creates the dream". The chant seemed to start as a mere statement of fact but soon grew into an exercise in scornful chastisement. They were singing about rock'n'roll dreams and rock'n'roll games, of course, fiercely proud to be on the winning side.

So Supertramp have won their game and created their dream. It bears little relation to mine.

Maybe if we had had a chance to talk we could have understood each other's dreams a little better.

'I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO LIVE DOWN MY FANTASIES'

No I won't do the call of the lesser spotted [illegible] amble bird again! Lene Lovich tiring of Dutch demands for 'Bird Song'. (pic: Paul Cox LFI)

So says LENE LOVICH, who hit with 'Lucky Number' last year. PAUL RAMBALI caught her in Amsterdam's Paradiso (where bonging on is *legal*, even) modelling this year's new album, 'Flex'.

Holland absorbs English-speaking rock culture with the same liberal lack of concern with which is embraces such things as drugs and pornography. Amidst the aroma of legalised combustibles pervading Amsterdam's infamous Paradiso, this seamy, run-down church plays a most cosmopolitan host to Lene Lovich and her band the only way it knows, divided between hash-induced states of blank reception and a more lively hue wrought by less exotic brews. Typical scenemakers litter the hall looking typically blase.

Normally the Dutch go a bomb on American cowboy boogie. But they like *noo wafe* too.

There's no mask to peel off Lene Lovich, or if there is, like some black horror story, it's stuck down too fast anyway. Ever since their days of studying sculpture at London's Central School of Art and Design she and guitarist, co-composer, and special friend Les Chappel have looked . . . peculiar. But the stares they provoke now arouse more from recognition than fright.

"I don't really notice them now," she states casually. "Of course some days I feel sensitive. If somebody really stares at me or shouts at me I feel funny; I feel defensive."

Do you ever have days when you want to be invisible, just hide in the crowd?

"Yeah, of course. Well, not so much hide in the crowd; I'm more likely to hide in my room. But I don't see why I should compromise what I want to do because of what somebody else thinks. I'd feel a terrible prisoner if I had to change everything that I wanted to do so that I could be like everybody else, and anyway, I don't care to be like everybody else."

Any amateur psychologist worth his empirical salt will tell you that people who grow up estranged, for whatever reasons, from the norm, whatever that is, will tend to accentuate the differences they feel rather than try to deny them. It's safer that way. And Lene Lovich's upbringing was nothing if not fragmented. Not that she regrets it though . . .

"Because I think it has made me strong; made me a very adaptable person to, ah, emergency situations. It's helped me to be very resourceful and to look after myself."

Whereas compared to hers, Les' up-bringing was: "Extremely stable. Nothing has happened."

"But you enjoyed it Les so why not? That's how it should be."

And did you enjoy yours, Lene or was it better in retrospect?

"More that. I was sad a lotta the times, but I got over it OK. I felt very unwanted from time to time, which is not a good thing for kids to feel. Though it makes them more resourceful."

"It either does that," adds Les, "or it tips them over the edge."

"I could have turned out totally unbalanced," she laughs, "but I'm not."

"The borderline cases are always the most interesting aren't they . . .?"

"Oh Les! Don't say that."

But he has a point. And both he and Lene are well aware that their music places them on the borderline of rock acceptance and pop idolatry, though they don't much care to be filed away in either division.

Lene Lovich takes her chances where she finds them. It's safe to predict that what she does next will be unpedictable. It may be witty, melodramatic, gypsy-blooded Euro-music or even some sort of Siberian railroad disco but it will be a little bit different.

She and Les recorded *Flex*, a new album in Holland, with crack ex-Roogalator drummer Justin Hildreth and an old pal of his Mark Chaplin, on bass. Another former Roogalator, keyboard player Nick Plytas, who cut the album but didn't want to tour, is replaced by Dean Klavett, an eager, amiable American out of Kansas City who worked with the Munich Machine, Frank Farian and Giorgio Moroder until he could no longer stand modulating between two chords for twenty minutes at a time (no matter how much he was getting paid).

The album, produced by Roger Bechirian — who produces The Undertones and engineers Lowe/Edmunds/Costello sessions (for which service he is paid a retainer by Jake Riviera), was written and recorded on the spot, Les and Lene getting up at 8 am to write the song that would be laid down that same day.

There are only three outside contributions — two of them from Chris Judge-Smith, an old neighbour of our odd couple, and a founder member of Van Der Graaf Generator. One of them, *You Can't Kill Me*, has already found its way into the live set, along with a handful of our duo's newies, including the deceptively strong *Bird Song* and their version of Frankie Valli's *The Night*.

One thing for sure, it's an *eclectic* show, eh Lene?

"We didn't want to be safe. We're very serious about what we do, but sometimes things are too important to take too seriously.

"We have a happy attitude to what we do. I don't want people to feel ill or upset when they come to see our shows, but at the same time I want to see them experience a few different emotions."

She denies, though, any contrivance towards this effect.

"I don't think what we do is in any way theatrical. It's expressive but not theatrical. I just get excited when I get on stage. It's not a character that I'm playing, it's just me on stage, with the lights on me."

And Les, who undergoes a dramatic change on stage, from a quiet, friendly bald man off to a menacing, shaven-headed figure of sharp, threatening movements?

"That's just 'cause I'm nervous."

He can spare his nerves the racking. The band, whom they're looking forward to settling in with after a string of relatively transient combinations, play with precision and flair that's equal to Les' own — and as a rhythm guitarist they don't come much tighter.

And if they did, it would barely be noticed by the Paradiso crowd, bewitched as they seem to be by the shadowy, gypsy shapes thrown by Lene. Her music means a lot to her; more, I suspect, than many people think.

Lene Lovich likes images with unusual but sharp definition that aren't necessarily concrete but are persuasive. She likes The Doors, and Salvador Dali, whom she once went to Spain to meet. At art school, where she did sculpture, her creations would often be enormous in size. But art school led, almost inevitably, to music, which was like seemingly everything else in her life an accident more than a design.

"I can remember back when I was little, living in Detroit, and the Motown thing was happening. It seemed to be a great way to get on in the world, even if you didn't go to college or have a very good up-bringing; it seemed to be a way to break out of things. So I suppose we did dream about that a bit. It was the fact that we heard it on the radio that impressed us most, especially Stevie Wonder because he was closer to our own age."

Lene's chequered life took her from Detroit to Hull and finally to London, where she and Les, whom she had known in Yorkshire and who had arrived at art school after deciding a degree in mining engineering wasn't for him, took to busking in the squalid precincts of Centre Point to supplement their meagre grants.

"Busking used to be gret fun," recalls Les, who even then wore his distinctive hairstyle (or lack thereof). "This was seven or so years ago and the whole thing has completely changed. But the spirit was great: you'd get whole crowds just gathering round and joining in."

"And sometimes the buskers would gather and make big orchestras," adds Lene. "Of course nobody made much money but it was great. And I like the idea of busking because you're not playing to a captive audience. If you're good and they want to listen they can, and if not they can walk by."

These lean years gave way to a spell in the Sheffield presentation of rock pantomime *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. Then Lene decided to answer an ad for a keyboard player. She couldn't play keyboards, but she knew someone who could. Out of this grew The Diversions, a good time funk outfit not a million miles removed from the Kokomos and Average White Bands that used to bump around London's boozers.

The progress of our Anglo-Hungarian subject from this, to the status of Euro-pop vamp, never threatened to be anything less than haphazard. She toured the continent with a hotel lounge cabaret band, acquiring confidence in her voice the five hour a night, six sets a week way. She dubbed screams onto the soundtracks of French horror movies. She wrote lyrics to Cerrone's *Supernature*. And probably did much else besides that will no doubt materialise in the fullness of her future publicity.

One fine day someone at Stiff Records heard a version of Tommy James' *I Think We're Alone Now*, backed by the duo's first stab at song-writing, *Lucky Number*. That brought them a five-year contract, and their number came up, though the race is still on.

One hurdle that took no time to surmount, however, was the limited options available to women in rock. Lene knows them all.

"We suffer from sterotypes more than men. They usually expect some kind of monster; either very cute, sweet, lovable and adorable, or a thing that shows as much flesh as possible, y'know, winks a lot, or else something very butch, or again something very homely."

But then females with hit singles to their credit and a zany image to go with it are vulnerable to criticisms of being mere panto-pop for the play school set.

"Yeah sometimes, but I think that's just shortsightedness. Maybe things are changing, but it's a very serious problem if you don't wear jeans. From a girl's point of view, if you want to be accepted in the music business you wear trousers or jeans. If you wear a dress they don't take you so seriously. It's true. Think of how many girls are taken seriously now and think how many wear dresses . . .

"I just decided when I went to Stiff that I would be myself whatever the cost, whatever happens. I don't want to have to live down to any kind of fantasy."

You're damned if you do, and dismissed if you don't. It isn't really so dramatic though. Lene sets her own criteria, and works hard to live up to them. She makes good pop, and makes no bones about it, but has yet to produce something that sustains what she and Les are capable of over the requisite 40 minutes; that employs more of the crafty wit of *Lucky Number*, the unique perspectives of *Home*, the concentrated mood of *Bird Song*, avoids the tiresome Slavonic rondos of *Say When* and *One In A Million* and expands the musical base to take in, for example, Les' interest in electronic disco, and take out the more trivial formulas they sometimes stoop to.

In the meantime, they look forward to making Trans-European moves across the dissolving musical common market borders.

They dread . . . "repeating ourselves too much; continuously going around on tour doing the same songs in the same way."

They expect . . . "that the world will get smaller to us."

And the thing they fear most is conforming.

Lene Lovich: a Ms who won't fit.

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A&M RECORDS

ON RECORD AND TAPE

MCA Records

In the '80s, so they say, pop will sound different. And certainly there've been some amazing sounds scooting up the charts. Like 'Pop Muzik' from M and 'Money' by The Flying Lizards. Plus, of course, 'Video Killed The Radio Star' by The Buggles. Where will it all lead, that's what we want to know. And so we ask ourselves....

IS THERE POP BEYOND TRASH? (Part 1)

IS THERE 'MONEY' IN LIZARD DROPPINGS?

Chief Lizard David Cunningham and Deborah, she of the finishing school vocals, at an arty angle.

You've seen the film clip, you're buying the record, you're totally amazed at DEBORAH who sings(?) the song. Now prepare yourself to meet DAVID CUNNINGHAM, the man who put the uplift in the FLYING LIZARDS. By: JOHN HAMBLETT

"Have you seen my badges?" asks David Cunningham happily. I nod. Nobody could fail to notice them against his sober blue pinstripe two-piece.

"I wear *the* and *flying*, I never wear *lizards*," he adds with a significant nod.

David Cunningham is, amongst a multitude of other things, the man responsible for The Flying Lizards, the group responsible for brittle interpretations of both *Summertime Blues* and *Money*.

Cunningham and I are sat in the park. The grass and trees are as green as they should be, the sun is going about its business in an enterprising fashion.

As Cunningham and I are in the park to discuss the fortunes, morals and aesthetics of The Flying Lizards I begin by asking why both the band's singles have been so similar in structure and presentation.

"Basically because of the personnel involved and the techniques used," he replies snappily. "Other bands have attempted to have a line up that is suited to the end product, they have a definite end in mind. I, on the other hand, have no idea what a record will sound like before I start.

"I always liked *Summertime Blues* and originally I wanted to do the Ike and Tina Version, lots of sax and very loud. Of course I ended up playing all the instruments myself. I didn't have a drumkit, I didn't have anything except a guitar and a pile of cardboard boxes, and so it sounds like it does. It was the limitations of the technology. I didn't know I was making a pop record at the time."

David Cunningham is 24, was born in Eire, attended a grammar school where he failed his Art A Level but went on to study for four years at art school collecting a First Class BA Hons in Fine Arts.

You are looking at a man who has a recording studio in Brixton but doesn't have a permanent home, a man who has produced Wayne County and The Electric Chairs, The Passage, and The Pop Group, a founder member of The London Musicians Collective, and a man who has appeared on *Top Of The Pops*. You are looking at a man, more obviously, who is of average height and build, has been going grey since he was 18, carries a black and chrome attache case, and wears executive sunglasses and cheap shoes. You are looking at a man who has been told that from the nose up he bears a striking resemblance to Paul Newman.

Meanwhile, taking the bit gently between his teeth Cunningham continues to talk on the subject of his latest creation.

"*Money* was different. *Money* was designed for Virgin Records. Given a completely free choice for a single I would've like to do something really extreme. But I knew if I'd presented them with something like that they'd have turned it down."

Like what?

"Just dreadful noise. I think there's definitely a place for dreadful noise, though it's certainly not commercial singles. What I was given the opportunity to make a really commercial single I wasn't following the formula of *Summertime Blues*. Although it seems that way in retrospect, I was simply trying to approach a song in a way that interested me. And because I was using Deborah's voice, as I had to in order to retain the Lizards' identity - and I was under considerable pressure to do so, not least from Deborah - this imposed some severe limitations...her vocal range is not what it could be."

So does he intend to make more Flying Lizards records in that vein, rather than David Cunnigham records which are a very different kettle of fish, as anybody who has listened to his solo piano project *Grey Scales* will tell you.

"David Cunnigham records are for the connoisseur," laughs DC waggishly before adding in a more serious fashion: "*Grey Scales* is for a very Imited audience. I don't want to shove the experimental down anybody's throat, because many people won't like it."

Maybe the Lizards are just a high camp joke, then, an elitist joke even?

"Isn't Sham 69 elitist in some respects, in the way that nobody except a small minority of working class youths are supposed to be able to relate to that music?" replies a cagey Cunnigham.

"If *you* produced Sham 69 it would be elitist," I respond.

Cunningham laughs. "Are you suggesting that I'm inherently elitist?"

"I think you find all this very humorous."

He sighs in mock resignation. "Yeah, I suppose so. This is all a concept. It's the group that isn't a group, and nobody's done that successfully since Jonathon King as far as I can see." *(Oh. - G. Numan)*

For the record there are normally three Flying Lizards. One is currently on holiday. Ordinarily this wouldn't matter, but this week it is imperative that Cunnigham muster enough relevantly qualified men to make up the team as there is a *TOTP* to be filmed. Toward that end the band has recruited Steve Beresford, an experimental musician of some standing, and Bob Black, the affable, handsome manager of The Electric Chairs to play drums, a duty he almost undertook fulltime for Gang of Four.

So will Cunningham continue to make commercial sounding Flying Lizards singles in the future?

"In a very old-fashioned sense I imagine they'll be progressive in that they'll attempt to expand the boundaries of what people are prepared to listen to, and what gets into the charts. Progressive music is terribly untrendy today, and the feeling still is that you can't get progressive music into the charts. But I've got a guitar solo in *Money* that I think ranks alongside anything that was done in the '60s....well, perhaps not anything, but it's a guitar solo. I'm proud of it."

"I can't quite recall it," I say with as much tact as I can assemble.

"Oh, it goes *SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS SHEEEOOOOO WWWWWWWW NIATWHUT NIATWHUT NIATWHUT*....like that, it's great," mimes Cunningham; and I recall the solo in question at the first *NIATWHUT*.

And what word on the Lizards album?

"It's something like 10 tracks in a similar vein to the singles, but I also envisaged a lot of dub on the album. In fact, the whole second side is dub."

"Are the motivations for making Flying Lizards records and David Cunningham records different?" I wonder out loud, hoping that they will be.

"Flying Lizards records are exciting, that's honestly the only motivation I have for making them. They excite me. David Cunningham records are boring. Their surprises are very low-key."

The wind is blowing quite purposefully now, and the sun is playing a silly game of catch me if you can with an impressionable group of young clouds. By mutual consent we decide to move.

IS THERE POP BEYOND TRASH? (Part 2)

IS THERE PLASTIC BEYOND THE BUGGLES?

If the pop charts are a dustbin, BUGGLES see themselves as shiny-suited environmental hygiene operatives.
"Round our way we call them dustmen," says PAUL MORLEY, a man who knows the difference between trash and rubbish.

I had nothing to do last Saturday, so I interviewed Buggles. Creatures called Buggles shouldn't have faces. But they do. Faces that merge...

I meet Buggles, perfectly logically, in a recording studio, where they are recording the B-side for the next single, *NEXT!* Trevor Horn is the Buggle who wears gogglers, and he's cheery, chubby and frank. Geoff Downes is the pin-up Buggie, and he's droll, casual and constantly amused.

Horn wears neatly pressed denims.

Downes wears a silver plastic-look coat.

They're a double act.

You've had some interesting press lately, I tell them - referring to recent pieces in the English 'prestige' press like *The Guardian* and *Observer*, in which Buggles appeared to be outlining a puppet philosophy with themselves as puppets *and* puppetmasters. A joke.

"What, you thought it was rather surprising that we'd suddenly made the break from crass pop to the intellectual pages of the quality press?" remarks Downes.

It seemed to me you were parodying the 'now' premise of the charts. I loved the idea that you were making "disposable plastic records for the '80s."

"People can dispose of the records however they want," begins Downes, oddly defensive when the word 'disposable' is introduced. "Somebody in The Regents said they were getting some plastic bags organised and they were going to drop loads of their singles over Hammersmith Pier or something. Disposable. I don't know. Are Beatles records disposable?"

Horn: "Whether or not a record is disposable depends whether or not you like it."

Maybe we should be talking about instantly forgettable. A week after it's left the charts, it's dead - except for a faded memory of a ghastly hook and an occasional ghostly return as a 'golden olden'. But hang on - *you* used the world disposable. It was in one of the interviews.

"Was it?" questions Horn.

Downes: "Yes, I think we used it in one or two: Probably winding them up."

Horn giggles. "Oh, one of our plastic interviews."

You do interviews in phases? This must be the serious, immodest and cautiously defensive phase. Defending rubbish in the modern world; take two.

Downes: "A lot of people seem to think it's like some sort of commercial exercise in the music business. Sort of the whole Buggles thing is hey man, let's take all the formulae that have ever made hit singles, put them into one big pot, smelt them down and produce one horrible bit of plastic."

Could be fun...

Downes: "It isn't even the truth. Because we actually take the whole thing very seriously. We really like what we're doing. That's the ultimate irony of it."

Horn: "This is what we do! The sort of music we like is what we make."

Downes: "It's purely by chance that what we do seems to have adapted itself to the record buying public."

You didn't plan that?

"Well, I mean, it crossed our minds," Downes laughs dirtily, "but it wasn't a sort of, by 1985 we'll have three hit LPs and 14 hit singles."

Horn: "Or, let's get a computer to work out our songs! I think *Video* is a pretty odd record, and having a song like *Plastic Age* on *Countdown* next to The Captain and Tennille I think is great. I suppose a lot of people would regard both as very much pop music, and yet there is a very great difference between the two."

Define to me, then, the difference between your expertly manufactured pop songs and the equally professionally blow-dried-and-set sound of Dollar's intriguingly structured singles. It's the same. Or so it seems to me.

Downes: "The Dollar thing, they're just faces. The real work is done by the producer."

Who could probably defend his work as deftly as you.

Downes: "He's not the front man. We are."

That's the difference?

Downes: "Yeah, we're the extension of ourselves - artist and producers."

Buggles are no jokers. They feel there's a valid place for Buggles. Their main reason for inventing Buggles was to return to live work - they've both done anonymous live work in the past - and put the smart ideas on LP, not to produce a couple of daft throwaway singles. The routine, the music business touring, recording - paying their dues - these are their disciplines and they see no other way. They are very boring, very average. And once the music has been stuck together, that seems to be the end of it. It doesn't go beyond mere product.

Downes: "Oh it does. When we play it on stage it will probably take on whole new dimensions, because the stage is the logical extension of what we've done in the studio."

Even those who hoped that Buggles were witty satirists, or a part of the forming video age, must be losing faith now. What about the people listening?

Horn: "We want to make them think."

Ah ha! in what way?

Horn: "I don't know, exactly. *Video* made people think, the phrase was used a lot. *Plastic Age* is about paranoia and pressure. We want the music to have a certain effect on people. It's not mindless. It's not mindless like 'you make me feel like dancing'."

Downes: "A lot of disco records seem far more like records that were constructed purely as a commercial proposition. Which is not the case at all with us. It's actually something we do feel."

So it's not 1980 bubblegum music.

Downes: "No. That's totally wrong."

Sort of 1910 Fruitgum Company.

Horn: "Actually, I'm surprised nobody's come up with 1910 Bugglegum Company."

You've done it for us.

Horn: "Yeah, it'll be the headline for the piece now."

Downes: "No, it'll be **BUGGLES SEE THEIR BANK MANAGER**."

Are you in it for the money?

Downes: "No."

Buggles complan about the '60s slant in the charts. They themselves have really only filched a few tricky little ideas from the '70s which they've just managed to put into operation now, with 'relevant' modifications. It's very '70s - the 10cc analogy is fair.

Horn: "Yes, I would say we differ from them immensely, in that they were a vocal harmony band of that time. We're a different ballgame really."

Downes: "They obviously had the same sort of fascination with the studio."

Horn: "This stuff wasn't particularly fashionable when we started off. Everybody was making rough records, or if they weren't doing that they were making very polished disco records. We wanted to do something that sounded different."

Different in a chart context?

Horn: "Just totally different from a sound point of view. We wanted to get away from all the sound cliches."

This concern with achieving 'uniqueness' within tight commercial restraints - why?

Horn: "Why not?"

Downes: "Because being original is generally considered..."

Conforming to the norm!

Downes: "Yes. We knew the people wouldn't be able to accuse us of too much if we were what we wanted to be and it was a different sound. They couldn't say, oh you've ripped off that and you've ripped off that."

Well, how do you feel about Talking Heads, introducing new shapes, angles, tensions, dynamics, that are intensely 'different'?

Horn: "Very good!"

Downes: "But then you have to sit down and decide if it's good or bad. Whether or not you like it."

You're kidding! Downes is obviously unmoved. But Talking Heads are a superb example of a group doing different things with texture, scope, sound, rhythm, a band that sound massively different from your so-called different music. Yours is frivolous.

Downes: "Well, it depends on your musical taste."

What's musical taste?

Horn: "You find Buggles to be frivolous, certain other people may find Buggles to be frivolous, but that's the way we like to do things. We can't please everybody. It's hard to please certain people, there's no way you can aim for it. What you have to do is what you really want to do, because that is the only thing you do properly. Because it comes from inside. If you try and cater for other people, please other people, you'll fuck yourself up, because you don't know what you're talking about. I wouldn't know how to make a record that somebody who was 16 and unemployed, would like.

"I wouldn't know how to do something specific to please him. I wouldn't know how to do something specific to please someone who was at public school. I just wouldn't know. You just do what you want to do."

Quite a moving speech.

Downes: "The thing is, there has to be a general decision made. Is a guy who had just started to play the piano and who can play *Chopsticks*, is he a better piano player than the guy who has studied for 40 years and can play perfectly every concerto in the book? Who is the better piano player? And who's the better music? Buggles or, say Public Image?"

That's a hard question.

The Buggles story should be no more than a short list. A commodity to be consumed and then discarded. Rubbish. But no. Buggles want to pretend they're durables. Are there any limitations in the Buggles sound, I ask? Aren't you going to run out of usable ideas pretty soon?

"I don't think so."

They don't think so! It could get worse.

"We used to be track repair men," reports Horn. "Song repair men. If you'd got a duff demo or song and £300 you'd come to us and we'd make it into a presentable record."

Horn and Downes spent the major part of the '70s as rag and bone session men, jingle stirrers, hack backing men, cheap producers and arrangers. The odd piece of rubbish they had a hand or two in had no doubt pierced our vulnerable subconscious prior to their debut hit-irritation, *Video Killed The Radio Star*. Remember that?

They got bored working for others in the studios, impatient with aiding all manner of punk/disco no-hopers. They fancied their own chances. With their own particular scruples - that were determined to be unusual and not easily categorised - and a mass of cynicism and experience, they meticulously assembled the Perfect Commercial Single, assured it would be an immediate hit. "It was essential the first single was a hit, cos it would open doors for us."

Although Buggles claim that if *Video* had flopped they would still have produced the LP, would still be touring, a major point in the plan of action was to liven up the best seller lists that they saw becoming progressively stale and obvious — 'plastic' — coming in at an acute angle like David Cunningham with his Flying Lizards. Their approach was as knowing and disordered as Cunningham's but more sophisticated, sensible, old-fashioned.

The plastic chart they frowned over was the one packed with shoddies, oddities, dying discos, humming punkies, phoney '60s retreads, tiring two tones...the same one they now fit into ever so neatly, ever so safely - hardly queerly like Flying Lizards. Obey your way to success. Where's the parody...lost in romance? Where's the heat?

"I had a feeling," boasts Horn, "that people wanted to hear interesting pop records again."

Downes: "If you listen to a record in the chart, or a Sex Pistols record, you'll find virtually the same instruments on each one."

Horn: "It's always the same sort of thing. We wanted to do something different. That sort of music lacks harmonic texture, tonal colour, dynamics..."

But do you have to make novelty records to bring that into pop?

Horn: "I don't think we saw it like that."

Downes: "It's all a matter of taste really."

Horn: "We saw it more as a pictorial style of producing music, like we used the record as though it was a picture, rather than a piece of music. You might construe it as novelty, but I never really see it that way."

Downes: "I can understand all the criticism, cos our records do stand for a lot of things that people don't like."

Horn: "One thing we had a good laugh at early on, especially when we were working on *Video*, we used to speculate what sort of comments it would bring from the music press. We used to say things like god, they're going to hate this, let's do it."

Downes: "Some of the things we did on the LP out of sheer bloodymindedness. We thought if we were going to go over the top, like you're halfway over the river, we thought well we might as well go right over."

The pop charts change our environment. I'd guessed that Buggles had an academic interest in the mechanics of the charts and were testing a few theories out. I was wrong. The charts for them are a list it's good to get into. Shrug.

They even said they were more interested in making the LP than the singles. Ouch.

But for all their protestations, they are just another clever-clever, goody-goody chart group manufacturing brand new non-communicative pop. Nothing matters but the wrapping and the apparent freshness.

TS Elliott observed that humankind cannot bear very much reality, and the filtered mock reality of this new school of grinning technicians and mannequins is the right junk for the times, where every little escape helps.

The charts can be fun, and surprising, but really it's just a dustbin. Stuck right where everyone can see it.

Buggles, for all their artistic pretensions, are trapped within the commercial system. They make transient art-products, and spend their interviews finding ways to explain it away that convince themselves they are fighting the bad.

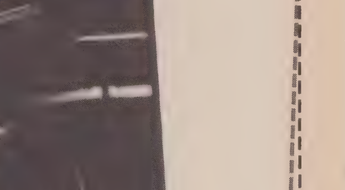
They *are* bad.

"I like The Beatles," admits Horn. "I hate to admit it."

This could be a key!

"What, we're Beatles clones," chuckles Downes.

No. Old men with old-fashioned prejudice and perspective tarting up slick pop with modern(e) mannerisms.



Buggles Downes (l) & Horn (r). The bank manager's on drums. (pic: Paul Cox/LFI)

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SKYHOOKS

the politics of endurance

OBSERVED BY ADRIAN RYAN

It's a bright Monday morning at Mushroom Records, and the low pressure chatter is of a kind that must induce memories of days of fame and glitter in the participants.

Beneath Stanley's pointy prickly on the telephone about a distant power's refusal to press an allegedly obscene B-side, company supremo Michael Gudinski is prowling about tying up a Night News Skyhooks special and PR persons are running about in nervous circles.

At the centre of it all Greg Macainsh is getting extremely and [illegible] annoyed. "Obviously two years is too long a wait between albums," he's saying, "but I can't be worried about that. We would have liked to get something out sooner but the fact that we had to reassimilate our new line-up and material made it just so much more difficult."

There's no hint in his attitude that the piece of vinyl in question, ten slick toons under the collective title of *Hot For The Orient*, is something that would have seemed slightly laughable only a couple of years ago: a slightly desperate comeback attempt. The album's expensive trappings (produced by Yankee HM specialist Eddie Leonetti, cover art by Hideki Fujii, the man responsible for Steely Dan's *Aja* wrappings) are the kind that are usually lavished only on top-of-the-tree Oz bands, but through the last year Skyhooks have been hanging on a lot closer to the ground. Since Shirley Strachan departed for TV wasteland, his replacement Tony Williams hasn't been exactly showered with accolades, even by those who should remember that the band's later gigs with Shirley were, more often than not, tepid parodies of the Hooks' performances in the glory days.

Making things even harder has been the TV-boosted release of a *Best Of* album heavily loaded with mid-seventies material, an event that effectively swamped the mild recognition Williams gained for his husky vocals on the *Over The Border* single.

"The compilation has really boosted live attendances," says Williams, "but it's a double-edged sword. We're getting audiences who don't even know that Shirley left the band 18 months ago. On the otherhand the people who do come along are having to accept the band on its own merits."

What those audiences are seeing is a show that bears only refined traces of the old impudent trash: the 1980 model Skyhooks are more likely to burn on stage with a measured flame than a string of explosions, and even if hints of ritual creep in when the old hits are whacked out, the Hooks can still deliver with an intelligent energy that's strong enough to show up the bluster o' most of their latterday rivals.

Williams is no exuberant showman in the Shirley mould but he more than holds down his place in a band that's a less edgy democracy than previously. There's a smooth rotation of frontmen duties that extends to the album on which two of the prime tracks *My Hearts Gets Blown To Bits*, and *Keep The Junk In America* are sung by Freddie Strauks and Bongo respectively. But behind it all Skyhooks are probably more Macainsh's band than ever, operating an ever-renewed core of songs (only a handful of the *Orient* tracks have had any great live exposure) that he's still writing with the same rigorous determination as when he came out of the outer suburbs of Melbourne in 1975 to give Australian rock'n'roll an unforgettable jolt.

Time, naturally, has brought its changes. "I think Greg may be reaching inside himself more these days," says Tony Williams, who's observed his friend's progress over a long decade which included a spell when they were together in the never-to-be-famous band Reuben Tice. "Most of those old *Living In The Seventies* songs were written up at his mother's place when he was still very much the young outsider observing the big city. That kind of impulse is one that's hard to keep up."

Macainsh himself is more reticent about his own development and that of the band. "I would say that Skyhooks these days are perhaps more of an entertainment unit than a subversive rock'n'roll band, but that element of social observation is still there. No doubt The Clash, for instance, will be looking at the world differently when they're all 35 and have houses and families in the suburbs."

On the subject of *Hot For The Orient* he expresses his satisfaction at again working with Eddie Leonetti, who also supervised the *Guilty* album and proved a revelation with his unorthodox (in relation to hidebound Australian studio operators) methods of aiming for an attacking high-volume sound, and building up the finished product by means of painstaking tape splicing.

"The new album should be far more consistent than *Guilty*. Leonetti was fairly ruthless in chucking out songs that weren't up to scratch. I've been trying to pare down my lyrics as much as possible and you won't find so much of that musical chopping and changing that used to be part of the so-called Carlton sound."

Macainsh's admission is that the new album keeps as close as possible to a commercial mainstream (may or may not be a symptom of the [illegible] instinct that's had him keeping the band together through a period when they've sometimes come close to calling it quits) while they were still only slightly tanned.

But one gets the feeling that even if they never again reach out to a musical frontier or feel the need to write an epistles anthem, or even if *Hot For The Orient* is no sales blockbuster, the Hooks will be making resonant noises for a while to come. Tony Williams may have been the last member to join, and the Skyhooks with the most in common with the band's original ethos, but he's confident enough to make a final statement of intent. "I can remember one of the band's very early gigs - it was one of those co-operative things where all the bands involved lost an equal amount of money and they each put out a little manifesto. I can remember Greg's read that they wanted to play progressive music with fun and energy. I can't see any reason why that shouldn't still apply."

THE MOST NEGLECTED ALBUM OF 1979

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KEVIN BORICH

The smile on the face of the 14-yr grind.

by ANDREW McMILLAN

"Who'd wanna play in huge concert halls when you can play in PUBS!" That's our Kev... (pic: Bob King)

Just over four years ago, I had contact with a rather convincing con-man who truly believed that within a couple of months, Kevin Borich would be a household name. That guy went on to rip a number of people off — including KB.

Ah, projections and reality.

To anyone who's seen Borich playing one of his hot nights, the idea of imminent world-wide, superstar fame is a totally logical projection. I mean anyone who plays that emotionally and gets such emotional reaction in return is a shoo-in, right? The reality though is, if not exactly despressing, a whole lot more sombre. Just how many hot nights do you have to have before the effect shows up in the daylight?

Since joining the La De Das in New Zealand 14 years ago, Borich has been cutting it. I'd hate to think of how many gigs he's done, how many times he's climbed on stage and turned in the kind of performance that many musicians can only muster once every few months. A guy who gets up there every night and fires...or dies trying. You can't help but admire someone who tries *that* hard.

Sure, he's done some woeful gigs; where the catatonia was equivelant to dropping half a dozen mandies. But he's also done a helluva lot of good ones; shows where he's fired like napalm, swung like a fence paling and kicked arse from here to Tuesday. And like a lot of people, he's probably wondering how anyone can work so hard for so long for such little return. Because despite his near-legendary status as a guitarist, the rewards haven't been all that great.

Since the demise of the La De Das and the subsequent formation of the Kevin Borich Express in July '76, Kevin's had his moments of glory - jamming on stage with his hero Carlos Santana at the Melbourne Rockarena, taking out the Best Guitarist award in most of the major rock polls... But those moments of glory have been countered by eons of struggling futility; (if Borich, a guy who still has all the hope, enthusiasm and humour of a winner, could ever admit the existence of a word like futility). His singles have received minimal airplay, record companies have lost interest in promoting his albums, the albums have rarely lived up to critical standards of song-writing and singing, the albums have failed to sell enough to hit gold, and his live drawing power has varied alarmingly over the years. When he's hot, they have to use tyre levers to jam'em in. But for every hot term, there's been a tour of lukewarm response and so-so crowd sizes.

Don't try telling that to his fans, though. Y'see, KB's got this small, but loyal, band of supporters rooting for him at every turn. Predominantly males, they've been following him for years.

You'll find them at all of his gigs. Down the front they'll be sweating like inebriated wettexs. With glassy eyes fixed on the stage, their heads rock back and forth to the beat while salty globules of perspiration hang from their eyebrows, drip from the tips of their noses and almost splash onto the floor or the foldback monitors — whichever's closest.

And on stage, Borich will be attacking with brimming enthusiasm, the manic grin side-swiped by animated tension as he strains for a note, darting in and out of the rhythm section, losing himself in the glorious feedback voids of *Snowball King*, forever pumping out the sound with all the passion and triumph of a climaxing lover.

With the scar creeping down a now withered right arm, he'll tear into it, pushing himself to the limit rather than nursing his recent injury.

On a good night, Borich, bassist Tim Partridge and drummer John Watson click with a special combination that even Chubb Safes would be proud of.

Born in England 30 years ago and raised in Tasmania, Tim Partridge is a long-term Tamla Motown fan who's worked with acts like Wendy Saddington, Jeff St John, Johnny Rocco, The Sect, Compay Caine, Rob McKenzie, Barry Leef and Renee Geyer. One of those (*Beware - Falling Cliches*) seasoned musicians who could just hang out and score a different gig every night of the week, he loves the sensation of coming off stage after a gig with Renee. It is, he says, a totally different feeling of satisfaction compared to killing a set with Kevin. At home he listens to Sister Sledge and Chic. He really can't tolerate the music that's being produced by people like Gary Numan. And yet, once he hits the stage, he powers into the rock'n'roll, working so compatibly with Borich that sometimes, the connection tends to become a little phased.

On stage, he resembles an inebriated Digger conducting a strained conversation in a bar, forever nodding his head in agreement with John Watson's bet.

A 19 year old North Queenslander, Watson's still got a lot to learn, both on the pool table and off. But as a drummer, he's quickly developing into one of the finest, and toughest, in the country. He approaches his kit like a child tormenting a family of crabs, hitting out with a look of boyish apprehension smeared across his face.

And all the while, Borich is pumping out more energy than Harrisburg. In any other band, the guitarist can lean back and relax for a few seconds, he can ease off and take a breather, sitting on the beat and feeding it. With the three -piece Express though, Borich doesn't give himself a chance to relax. He's got to be out front all night, pushing the trio as far as it'll go. And then some.

Three-piece rock'n'roll outfits have always been a dicey proposition. At present, I can think of only two that are really cutting it — The Police and Motorhead. (KB, by the way, is virtually unaware of Motorhead. Definitely not the dedicated follower of fashion, he hasn't even heard Led Zep's *In Through The Out Door* yet). He tried a four-piece Express last year with American keyboardist Tim Schaeffer, but came back to working with a three-piece.

"I guess the motivation of it is that it's really free when you play. It's harder too, in a way, but there's just that much more room for everyone to stretch out on."

Mind you, he is keeping his options open. "I'd have to meet someone who could just slot in really easily before I'd extend the band."

Some of the most exciting and powerful gigs I've seen from the Express came from the four-piece of late '78. Since then, those moments of glory have been few and far between. Most people would become introspective and disheartened; Kevin only hints at those feelings occasionally. And even then, they're veiled with self-effacing laughter.

The lack of success of his last studio album, *No Turning Back*, for instance, doesn't appear to have broken his heart.

"Maybe it wasn't good enough, or maybe the people who like us didn't like it...I don't really care anyway...When you start analysing why it didn't go, you're just marking time." (Mind you, if The Angels had that attitude, they'd still have long hair, scarves, and Keystone as the prefix to their name).

"I guess you're supposed to do market research, I don't know. I never really take it too much like that, but it's a business, so I guess you have to."

In the meantime, Kevin seems quite happy to be slogging it out every night in the pubs.

"It's so much easier now than it's ever been. The conditions are a lot better. We can spend a lot more time in Sydney, because now there's the work here to sustain us. So you can stay in Sydney for two or three weeks and the only other thing is Melbourne.

"If you travel a lot. like we did in England, then it becomes really hard work. But I enjoy it, y'know. I love playing...Now we've just got to get the records happening!"

To that end, Borich has signed a new deal with Mushroom (his third local company in two years), and is about to release a new album recorded in London last year.

"We were in the Morgan Studios for a week," he explains. "It was really good. We did it with a guy call Chris Tangerinis. He really knows that studio. He's been there since the days when Black Sabbath recorded there. He's still a pretty young guy, so he was probably a tape operator or something then. He did a lot of Gary Moore's solo stuff and I think he worked on Phil Lynottt's *Sarah*. I think he's even recorded Dame Edna Everage - his great claim to fame! - which I thought was great.

"We had a really good time recording. I'm much happier with this album than any other things we've done beause the sounds are good and the vocals have come up well."

This one could well be the album that finally unites *all* Borich's fans, 'cos when he's hot, so are they. And I can't think of too many local artists who've inspired such lasting loyalty from their fans.

"There's a lot of people in the audience I've seen coming for the last four years," says Kevin. "Some of them have actually been coming since the La Da Das. It's good to see those people...it's *really* good in a way.

"Our sort of music, it may not be in vogue on the airwaves, but it's good live. I mean, people get into it, they seem to dig it. I guess it's just the energy and the feels."

Those same loyal fans have also named Borich as the Best Local Guitarist in the last three RAM readers' polls, an honour that Kevin approaches with modesty verging on embarrassment. If ever there were any signs of a rock star's monumental ego, they've certainly disappeared now.

"It's nice to know that people dig it enough to take the time to write in. It's just a fun thing, isn't it? It's not like the Academy Awards or anything like that...heheh...I guess it is really! One's as silly as the other!"

The laurel of Best Guitarist is not one that KB wears easily. It is, by its very nature, an inaccurate category anyway.

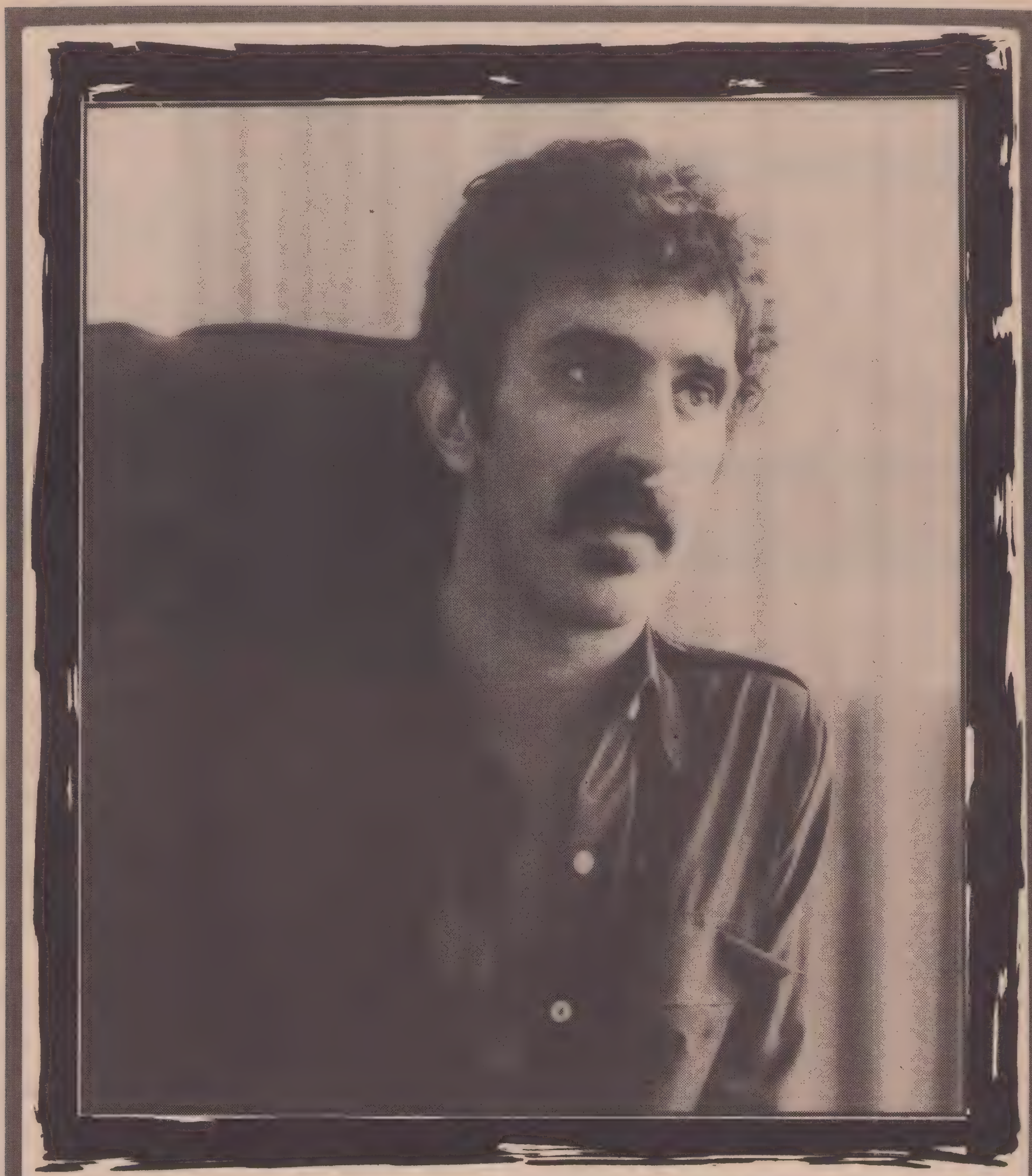
"There's a lot of fucking good guitar players around," he says (Among his favourites are Ian Moss and Ian Howsen).

"I don't know whether I won it 'cos I'm in front of the band or what. It's a mystery to me.

"I'm pretty grateful to those people actually. I can't really call 'em a bunch of whackers 'cos they think I can play. It's kinda funny...Do I get an award? A new set of strings!

"Chuggy (manager Michael Chugg) told me about it actually. He said, *I've got some bad news for you*...heheheh...I guess I'm quite proud of that in a way. I mean, I haven't got a hit record, so I've gotta be proud of something.!"

And then he collapses in a fit of innocent boyish laughter. "I mean, who'd wanna play in huge concert halls when you can play in *PUBS!!*"



THE SANEST MAN IN THE WORLD TODAY?

The Frank Zappa Interview

BY HEADLEY GRITTER

(For Sydney listeners: 2MBS - 102.5 on the FM band - have a Zappa Special at midnight on April 1.)

***Headley Gritter is fast gaining a reputation as the wildest, boldest Ozzie in California.**

Frank Zappa has been the enigmatic paradox of rock 'n' roll for the past two decades - a man of apparent contradictions if ever there was one. On the one hand he seems totally outrageous and irreverent - showing respect for nothing institutionalized. But musically, he is as precise and regimented as he is prolific. He condemns all forms of drug-induced unreality, yet the ardour of his fans often has a direct correlation with their own illicit consumption. He dubbed three of his offspring Ahmet Rodan, Dweezil and Moon Unit in the throes of sobriety. His musical personifications are gregarious and agrarious to the extreme, but the man himself rarely ventures out of his basement studio. When you meet him you find yourself speaking to a calm, mild-mannered, yet icily sharp-minded thinker.

Constantly generating outrage, a recent offering, 'Sheik Yerbouti', caused a confrontation with the Anti-Defamation League. Now he's released 'Joe's Garage' - a three-part 'operatic' work. One track - 'Catholic Girls' - achieved confrontation with papal authorities. But litigation and controversy have become facts of life for Mr Z. His exit two years ago from the Warner Brothers Record Co was accompanied by an exchange of suits - and not the three piece variety.

Frank Zappa is one of the few true individuals who can confidently be termed a genius in today's prefabricated musical world. Today's insights include excursions into Zappa's rarely talked about home life. Plus - **sex, drugs, politics, sociology, the meaning of friendship and human relationships.**

RAM: *Is there a difference between Frank Zappa the person and Frank Zappa the entertainer?*

ZAPPA: Absolutely. You are now talking to Frank Zappa the entertainer. You will never talk to Frank Zappa the person.

How many people do get to talk to Frank Zappa the person?

Just my wife and kids.

It seems that, from the start, you've done controversial things and you seem to take delight in people being freaked

When a person takes drugs or uses alcohol, they think they're giving themselves a license to be an asshole. Because they can always say, "Whoops, I'm sorry, I was so stoned I didn't know what I was doing," and suddenly that makes it OK, you break something in somebody's house, or you're causing some problem...

ANOTHER VOICE: *Your limousine...*

Oh, my limousine is here, well, tell him to wait.

FAMILY LIFE

OK, now you've just had a kid, congratulations, a girl.

Thank you.

Congratulations on behalf of Australia...Now you announced before if it was a boy it was going to be called Burt Reynolds, and if it was a girl it was going to be Clint Eastwood Zappa...

No, I didn't mean to put the Zappa on there, it was just a joke. I said if it was a boy it was going to be Burt Reynolds, and if it was a girl it was going to be Clint Eastwood. People believed that?

When you take the name of your previous three kids, it's not that far-fetched.

Oh, is it?

Well, I don't know, I've never heard a name like "Moon Unit"...

Well, first of all, "Moon" in Spanish is "Luna", and there are very many people named "Luna". "Moon" has also been used as a first name in the United States. Not necessarily for girls, but, there happens to be a guy that Carter has just nominated for one of the positions in his administration, a guy named "Moon" Landru, you know, which Moon was very distressed to hear about, by the way.

Does she thrive on the uniqueness of it, or...

To them it's just their name; they'll always know that her name is Moon and his name is Dweezil, and he is the only Dweezil in the world, and Ahmet's name is Ahmet and Deva's name is Deva, and that's the way it is, you know. Like it or lump it.

How did you meet your wife?

She was a groupie.

Really?

Yeah.

She was at a gig?

Well, she wasn't at a gig; she was a secretary at the Whiskey A Go-Go; and she was brought to my attention by another girl who was also a secretary at the Whiskey A Go-Go, who was my housekeeper at that time.

And you met her backstage.

No, actually, I met her at the airport, when I came home from my first tour. I had seen her one time before that; she was at a party at the house but I hadn't talked to her.

Was it instant love?

Well, I don't know about that. But, you know, we've managed to last for 12 years so far; we're doing OK.

Is she into the same sort of things that you are, musically?

Yeah.

And socially; is she socially introverted like you, too?

No, she's more gregarious; she has fun things like car pools, and things like that; she has some traffic with the outside world, but usually, I work in the basement, and all that she does is in the upper part of the house, and the neighbours come to visit her, they don't come to see me; I just stay down there, and that's fine.

It seems like she's a very important part of your life if you don't go anywhere else.

Yeah, of course she...she's my wife. My best friend.

That's important. You have any fights?

Ahh, let's see. We've had a couple, but I can't remember when the last one was. It's been years.

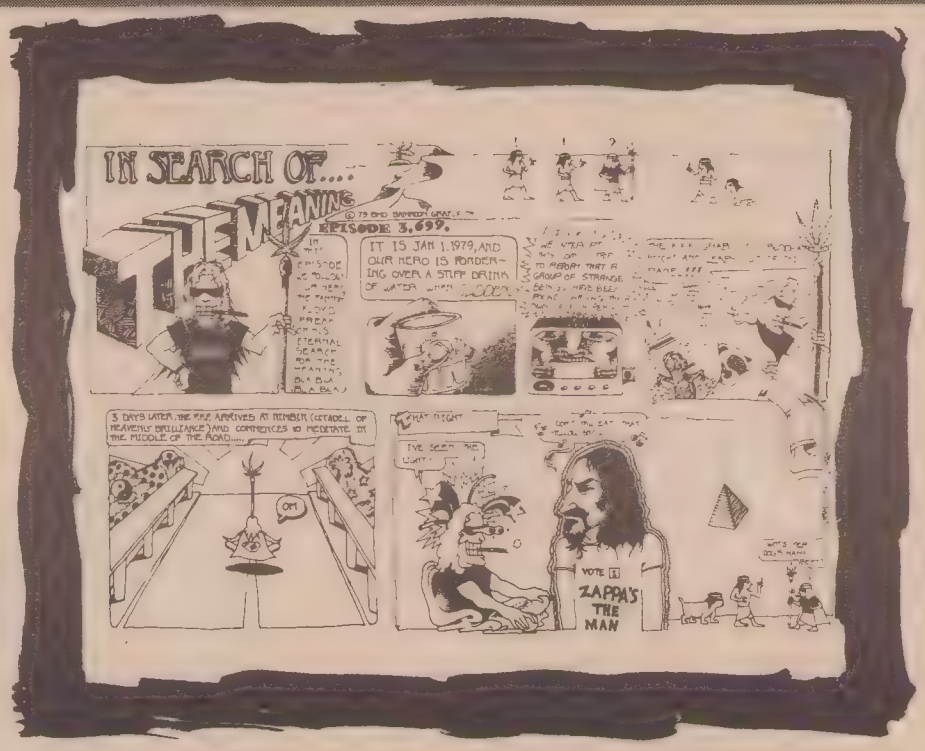
How soon is it usually over?

Well, that's none of your business.

GROSS-OUTS

Fair enough, let's go onto some of the famous Zappa rumours that may or may not be true. Firstly, the famous stage-dare with Captain Beefheart, was it, where you were supposed to have come out and laid a turd on stage?

No, that never happened. First of all, that story has a lot of different versions. There was supposed to be a gross-out contest between me and a member of the audience; there was a gross-out contest between me and the Fugs; now you're telling me about one between me and Captain Beefheart, and none of


IN SEARCH OF....
THE MEANING
EPISODE 3,699.
IT IS JAN 1.1979, AND OUR HERO IS PONDERING OVER A STIFF DRINK OF WATER
5 DAYS LATER...THE FIRE ARRIVES AT REMDER (CITADEL OF HEAVENLY BRILLIANCE) AND COMMENCES TO MEDITATE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD....
OM
WHAT NIGHT
I'VE SEEN THE LIGHT
VOTE
ZAPPA'S THE MAN

these things ever happened. I never went do-do on stage, I've never eaten any do-do on stage; there never was any gross-out contest. My stock answer to this question is, the closest I ever came to eating shit, of any description, was at a Holiday Inn buffet in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

So how do these stories get started?

By drug crazed hippies.

Did you hire one for your P.R.?

Absolutely not.

Do the people around you, especially musicians have to be non-drug users too?

Well, you can't legislate that, all I require is that if somebody is on my payroll, at the time that they're performing a service for me, like if they're on the road, that they don't use drugs, and they don't have any drugs in their possession. What they do, now I'm on the road six months out of the year, what they do in their spare time with their private life is their business; but once they're on the road, they're representing me, and I'm footing the bills for their total lifestyle. I'm providing their hotel, their food, their transportation; I'm paying their salary and doing all these things, and, in exchange, they are supposed to make themselves available, and competent to play concerts for the audience that comes to these places expecting a show. Now, if they get ripped and they can't play, they're letting the audience down, and they're doing it in such a way that the blame goes on me. I use as much force as I can to make sure that if somebody is buying a ticket to one of those shows, the show is going to happen when they get there, and it's going to be as good as we can make it. And also, if a person is in possession of illegal substances and gets arrested, and suddenly isn't there, then he's leaving a hole in the show and that makes other people have to work harder. So that's the reason for the anti-drug situation in this band, it's just a practical, business consideration.

What about those guys who think they play better when they're ripped?

I don't think that there are such things. I think that that's psychological.

Could Lowell George be an exception?

In terms of what?

He'd smoke pot before you'd play together.

Did he smoke before he played with me?

Yeah, he did play with the Mothers for some time, didn't he?

Yeah, he did. And I wasn't sure that he was using drugs all the time...well you know, short of having a bloodhound and sending the dogs up and down the halls in the motels, once they finish the concert and go back to their room in their hotels I know that a lot of times guys from the band would go up there, and just to merely defy me they'd huddle together in these groups in these little rooms and smoke the devil-weed. And it got to be preposterous, you know, like with Mark and Howard (aka Flo and Eddie. Listen to *Live At The Fillmore* for reference), they'd be in there getting ripped and they'd be stuffing rags under the door, and they think I don't know these things, but...

Did they see you as the evil general that they had to hide from?

Yeah, they picture me in a lot of different ways, you know, that's their business, the way they picture me, it's not the way I am, and it takes a certain amount of self-discipline to understand what the reasons for making these requests are.

MOTIVATIONS

There seems to be three possible motivations: fame, money or musical satisfaction. In your case: what is the proportion?

Well, there's only one motivation, and that's doing art.

You're not concerned with fame, and you've got enough money to last you?

It doesn't work that way, in other words, I need money. I absolutely need money because I'm working in a medium that requires the expenditure of money in order to do the art. If I'm going to make a record, it doesn't come down out of the sky and land on the turntable. There's people that have to be paid to play instruments, studios that have to be rented, equipment that has to be purchased, and all this other stuff that has to be done and it's all expensive. If you have to make a movie, that's even more expensive. Any kind of endeavour in this type of business is definitely tied to the expenditure of money. And most of what I make goes right back into the purchase of equipment or into salaries.

You're not rich?

It depends on what you call rich.

Well, enough not to worry about ever being poor.

Oh, I wouldn't say that, no, absolutely not.

And fame isn't a consideration at all?

The only thing that is important about being famous is in the industry community, if I have to go and seek financing for a project, if nobody heard my name, I have no chance of getting financing. If they heard about me someplace, the chances are better. So, to that end, being famous is convenient, you know, but I don't do what I do so that I can be a famous guy.

You don't worry about a future generation of music lovers...

No. First of all, I don't think that there *has* been a generation of music lovers, let alone one that's going to take place in the future. There are generations of people who consume various types of products, but generations of music lovers, let's reserve that description for something a little bit more appropriate.

How did Warner Brothers come to sign you in the first place?

At the time they signed me, they were signing what they thought were a variety of underground acts. They also signed a few things that they thought were "artsy", that would give their label this broad-ranging esteem, to make them look like a well-rounded type of record company, and that's the reason why we got on their roster.

When did you fall out with them?

I got very pissed off at them when I delivered four albums to them and they didn't pay me.

When was that?

About two years ago. It was in March. Four completed albums, on tape, reader to master. Four. All done. I have a contract that says, when I give them the tape, they give me a cheque. I gave them tapes for four albums, and they didn't give me any money, and I had paid out of my pocket to make the four albums, and I was waiting to be reimbursed by them in order to pay off the expenditure that I had put into the thing. They didn't give me the money, they didn't have publishing licenses for the material, and they proceeded to, against my wishes, and in breach of the contract, release all four albums, without paying for them, and without getting publishing licenses.

Some people say you just rushed them off to get out the quota of albums you had to do for them.

Absolutely not.

Was it part of your stashed away material?

No, absolutely not. There's at least one real masterpiece that was delivered in that batch and that's *Gregory Peckory*.

'Gregory Peckory'?

Yeah, the whole side of one of those things. I mean, anyone listens to that and thinks it was rushed out...there's *a lot* of stuff on there that probably has more production values than a lot of the ones that came before it.

POLITICS

What do you do for recreation, do you watch television at all?

I like the news, it's always funny. I love to see people lie their ass off. That reaffirms my belief that people are basically bad.

Do you think that all people are basically bad?

Yeah. But you can't hate them for it; that's the way they're made. That's the problem that people run into when they're trying to adapt to society-at-large; they find out that people do all these bad things; they lie and cheat and steal, and they cause red tape to occur, and they fuck up other people's life styles, you know, but it's only because people are basically stupid and incompetent and bad, and once you realise that that's the way everybody is, then you deal with it. But you can't go around hating them just because they're stupid, incompetent or bad; then you cause inner problems.

Do you think politicians are bullshit?

Yeah, basically. I think that the only things that they have an interest in is their own well-being, and feathering their own nest, and the acquisition of more power for their own personal gratification, or they're caught in a situation where they have to work on behalf of a corporation someplace.

In the United States, or in the world?

In the world! In the whole world, you know, be realistic about it; it's all commerce, it's all bound to exchange of goods and money here and food there and nuts and bolts. That's what it's about. OK? Take a guy, Carter is an example, but he doesn't seem to be any worse than the rest of the incompetents that have been in there; the sales pitch is, "I'm a nice guy; vote for me. I'm so nice I couldn't possibly hurt you," you know, and people are so scared of the governmental system anyway, they'll vote for somebody that they think couldn't possibly hurt them. It's preposterous. You want to know what the real problem is? Nobody ever says this, I'm going to tell you a big secret. Let's get close to the microphone. *DEMOCRACY DOESN'T WORK. IT DOESN'T FUCKING WORK.* It doesn't. The only way democracy can work is if everybody is equally educated, equally fed, and is in possession of relatively the same amount of discipline so that they can share the responsibility of governing themselves. You know? How do you expect a guy who's starving to death to make a rational intellectual evaluation about a candidate and his ultimate worth in terms of dealing with world-wide problems when you have a couple of guys up there and the bottom line pitch is "two chickens in every pot" A guy that says that "I'm going to fix inflation" which automatically translates down to "It's going to help my food situation", or "help my material goods situation."

Is there a solution to this?

There probably is. But I'm a musician, and I'm not going to be a prophet. I'm just telling you that there's got to be some way, maybe a number of smart people in a number of different fields could think about it, and come up with some suggestions, but most of the suggestions that you hear about are all filtered through a news system that's controlled by the same people that *want* things to stay the way they are.

So the message of 'Joe's Garage' is that sameness isn't a virture, it's one of our biggest threats.

It is. People tend to forget it. Look, there's always this little problem that happens in the back of your mind. You say to yourself, "I'm right, I'm a person, I know what I want, I know what I like, but, I'm a number to the rest of the world; with the exception of the two or three people who are my close friends, I'm nothing." And people don't like that feeling.

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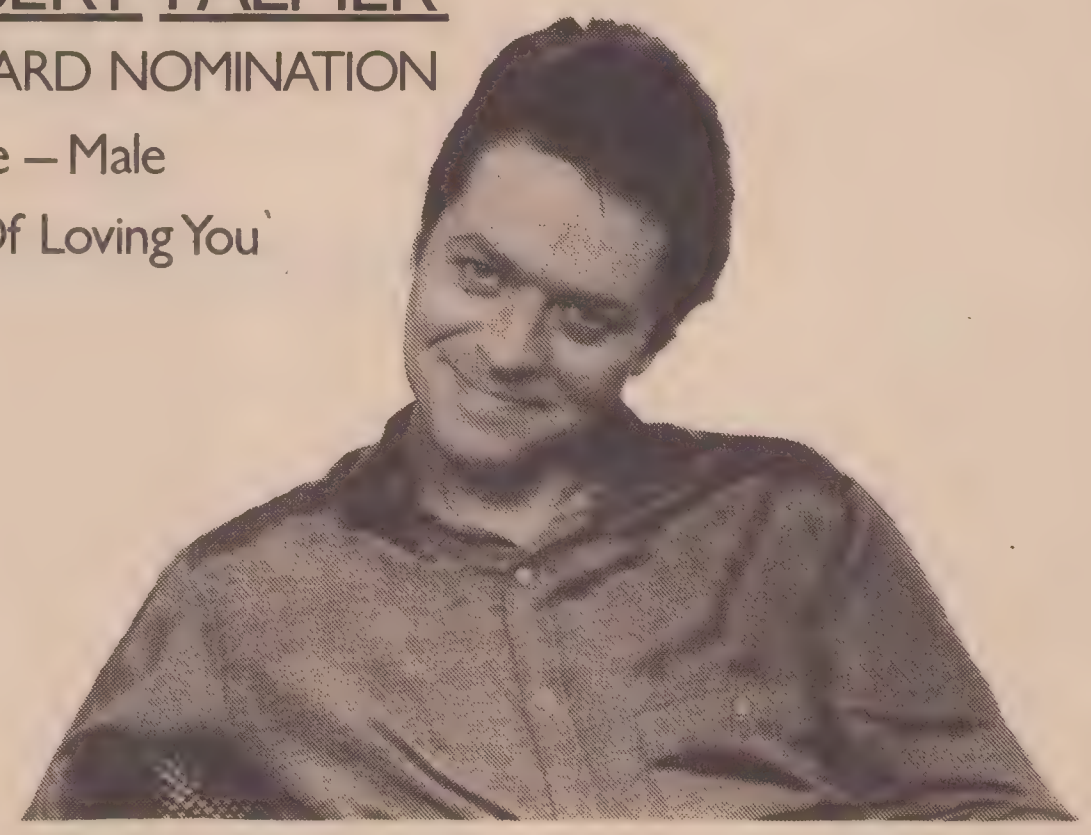

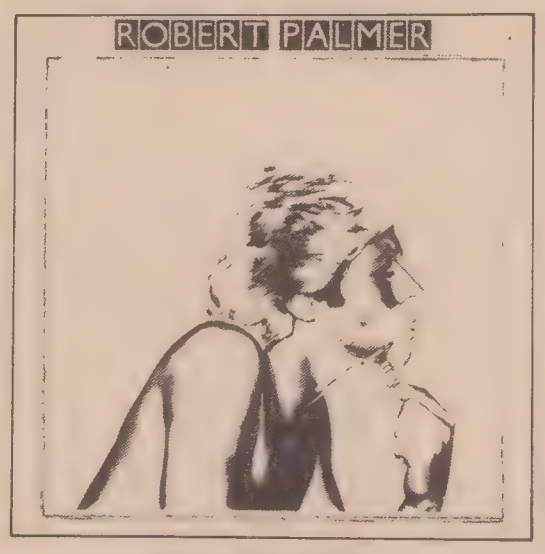

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out.

That's your perception. That's not the real reason why things are done.

No motivation to shock at all?

Well, first of all, I've said in other interviews and especially in terms of the American public: if they could be shocked, we'd be in a lot better shape; because if they could be shocked, then they could be outraged, and if they were outraged, then they might be able to do something about the way their country is, and the way the other things are around the world. I think it's almost impossible to shock an American. You can make them twitch, you know. You can give them a little electric cattle prodder, like in a biology class when they hook the electricity up to the dead frog leg, you can get a reaction like that, but they can't really get shocked and incensed, because they always presume that the government will send them a check later, the whole welfare state mentality.

FRIENDS

Do you have many friends left in the music business?

I don't think of things like friends, and in the music business nobody really has friends, you know, the same way as any other business. But it's just the nature of business - it's not a friendly kind of activity, it's a business activity. It's very ruthless and it's very cold-hearted, and it has nothing to do with friendship. And there's nothing more disgusting than people pretending to be friends while they're in business. It's just horrible. It's against the laws of nature, because you know it's not sincere, so why should you have to put up with the added insult of this insincerity on top of the way the horribleness of the business is already?

Is that something you've realised over the years, or is that something you knew straight off?

I think that I learn more about it every year. It's one of those kind of lessons that the more you stay in the business, the more disgusting it gets.

You're getting weary of all the lawsuits, papers and courts?

No, as a matter of fact I'm looking forward to going to court with Warner Brothers and with my former manager and with his brother, the attorney.

They ripped you off?

I would say that would be a gross oversimplification; it was a lot more subtle than that. It was a lot more unpleasant than that.

FIENDS

One of the stranger people you've been involved with in the past is Wild Man Fischer; what's the story with him, where did you find him?

The first time I met Wild Man Fischer was in a restaurant called Caners. He was sitting at a table, and he was introduced to me by a guy from a a group called The Leaves. He says, "Have you ever heard of Wild Man Fischer?" and I said, "No," and he said, "Come here, I'll introduce you to him," and he says, "Frank, this is Wild Man Fischer, blah, blah, blah," and he told me that he sang, and he did all this stuff, and shortly thereafter I heard some of what he did, and I thought he was really good. This was right about the time we were making the *Freak Out* album in '64 or '65. So I tried to interest Tom Wilson, the guy that produced that first album, in Wild Man Fischer. I said, "Just listen to him, just listen to him, bring him up to the studio and just hear him once." So he agreed and I brought Wild Man Fischer into the studio, and he proceeded to run around, and break a bunch of microphones, and knock over music stands, and go totally ape-shit in the studio. And Wilson looked at me like I was crazy, and said he didn't want to have anything to do with Wild Man Fischer, but I still thought that Wild Man Fischer had some good material, and that there should be something done. So when I had my first label deal, I signed him to a contract and recorded that album. I worked for him three months. I was the producer on the project; I took care of him, he was getting a weekly salary, which he'd immediately go out and spend and lose, he was ultimately found sleeping in the street, his hair was all stuck together with garbage. I was on the road one time, and he came up to my house. My wife was there, this girl named Janet who was the babysitter, and the kids were there, and Wild Man Fischer is standing there outside the fence screaming and ranting that he wants to see me. And they saw him, and they saw that he was all dirty; his hair was all messed up, you know, like he'd been sleeping in the street. And they brought him in, and they gave him a shampoo, and they let him take a shower, and they cleaned him up. And you know what he did? He punched the babysitter, and knocked her down, broke some of the children's toys, and Gail threw him out, and I said from that point this guy is not welcome in my house, because he can be violent. He attacked his brother with a hammer; his brother was walking across the campus at U.C.L.A. Larry had a ball-peen hammer hidden behind his back, he walks up to him, as soon as he gets this far away, he goes "bonk" and shatters his chest bone, and just keeps right on walking. Wild Man Fischer is interesting, but he's not very much fun, and he is dangerous.

JOE'S GARAGE

Jumping to the immediate present, what's the theme of your 'Joe's Garage' series?

Well, it's a pretty complicated story. It's based on the idea that sometime in the future the government decides that in order to make things work more smoothly, that they're going to have to have "enforceable sameness". Now obviously, if everybody's the same, as the ADL would like to have it be, if everybody's the same, then there are going to be fewer problems in the world. Now, this is going to be difficult to legislate, because people aren't the same, they're all different, see, so some wise guy comes up with the idea of total criminalisation. If you commit a crime, then you're a crook. But then again so's the President, and so is the head of this religion over here, and so's this guy over there, and so we're all crooks, we're all the same, and everything is simple. So, he comes up with this idea of total criminalisation. But there are some people who don't want to be crooks, and they have to be tricked into it. So, that's where the government comes up with this idea that the easiest thing to do, to get a whole new bunch of crooks, is to make music illegal. And if you like music, then you get to be a crook, and then everyone's the same.

So, the story of *Joe's Garage* is being told by this guy who's the Central Scrutiniser, who has this kind of robot-like voice which you hear talking about music, and how it can corrupt you. It's like reverse psychology; you can tell them that this is dangerous, and a few people are going to do it and, bingo, crooks. So, the way the album is structured, the Scrutiniser introduces himself, and then announces that he is now going to deliver this story, and explains what can happen to you if you choose a career in music. And the story features a guy named Joe, who starts off in a garage, he has a garage band, he wants to play the guitar, and before you know it, he plays a couple of notes on the guitar and the neighbour complains because it's too loud, and bingo, he's in trouble with the law already. He's starting his downward slide, from the very first time that he hits a note, you know that the trouble is beginning. And the whole structure of the album traces this series of events that happen to Joe, until he finally sees the light, and takes a day job, at the Utility Muffin Research Kitchen, and now he's a happy guy. In between he has a lot of stuff happen ot him.

How do you get ideas like that, do they just flash to you one night, or is it something you see in the movies...

No, an idea like that takes about three days.

It comes to you in spurts?

No, you see you get an overall picture and then you start seeing relationships between different units inside of the big structure, and then you develop it, and then you screw down the bolts that hold the structure together.

SEX

Much of your earlier stuff dealt with the subject of groupies, a lot more than now. Do you think the role of the groupie has dwindled in importance in the American music scene?

Absolutely not, as a matter of fact we have a groupie character in *Joe's Garage*, Mary, who winds up being a crew slut, and sucks off the entire road crew, goes with the groups, she goes on the bus with them and does their laundry and they fuck her senseless and dump her in Miami, and she has to enter a wet t-shirt contest in order to get home.

Are there fewer groupies today than there have been in the past?

It's not as glamorous or fashionable a profession as it used to be in the sixties.

Why is that? Women's liberation?

No. It's because in the early days of the sexual revolution in the United States, if you announced to the world that you were a groupie, you also announced that you were licensed to go out and strap on anything that moved. It gave you a reason to exist, and an explanation for your behaviour, which otherwise certain people might have taken exception at. Now, everybody goes out and straps everybody else on, you know, you don't need to say that you're a groupie. You can just go out and do it, it's not a necessary sort of vocation anymore.

So you say that it isn't that groupies have disappeared, it's just that everybody now acts like one?

Well, no, that's not exactly true either, because a groupie is a specialised type of activity, it's a person that goes after a person in a group; or a person who straps on the crew, who is normally called a "crew slut". So there's different qualifications; there's girls who follow baseball players and follow football players, and they all have names, you know. One that people like to think of, you kow, "the groupie", as though that were this major subsculture of millions of girls running around with their tongues hanging out. And you have girls with tongues hanging out for every profession. Doctors down to garbage truck drivers, there's always *somebody* that wants to fuck them. And lucky for them.

What's the most obscene thing you've ever seen or heard of being done to a groupie?

As an obscene thing? I don't think in terms of obscenity.

That would shock people?

I don't know what would shock most people because, let me make this very clear, a lot of people pretend to be shocked by things they actually go home and do in their spare time. I don't trust people, because what they say and what they do and who they are, those things never quite seem to mesh together, you know.

Like the song, 'The Mud Shark'...

The *Mud Shark* business, you know, the idea of using dead fish to provide erotic gratification for a girl who desires dead fish erotic gratification is not obscene, it's an act of mercy. If the girl likes to have a shark stuffed up her, and the guy is providing this service, he's a cool guy.

Is there a definition for obscene? Is there anything that you would say, well, this is obscene; anything within these parameters is obscene?

Well, I think that the matter of obscenity is a legal determination, and it's very vaguely determined by the legal profession. But I'll give you an example that's been told to me, that one of the most disgusting things you can do in certain societies is show somebody the bottom of your feet. I think in Bali or places like that. But if you're barefooted and somebody's sitting across the room from you and you're talking, and you sit in such a way that they are forced to view the bottom of your feet, you are a very disgusting person; you have committed something that is just totally reprehensible in that community. Whereas in Southern California you can see that it isn't that way. So it's a matter of community standards.

DRUGS

So it's any society's current thinking at any particular time. Now, on to the question of drugs; you've always been an advocate of non-drugs, yet your following is probably mostly composed of people who do indulge in drugs...

Well, first of all you have to show me some statistics to prove this.

Well, I can only go by what I know from people I know, and the more into Frank Zappa music a person is, usually the higher their drug intake.

Well, I think this is a very unfair statement, and my knowledge of Australian consumers and what they stick into their bodies in order to alter themselves is limited, but my knowledge of what happens now in the States is probably not so limited, and I would say this, that drug use in the United States cuts across all stratas of society. There's plenty of drug using doctors and lawyers and government officials, and just because my record happens to be on the turntable while they're getting ripped doesn't mean that in any way they're getting influenced by me to indulge...

Well, I'm just wondering how you were able to relate so well to that certain drug-taking Zappa-enthusiast section of the community.

I don't relate to them at all. I don't hang out with them.

How come they relate so keenly to you?

That's a mystery to me.

Have you ever tried to work that out?

No.

But it's a large part of your following...

You're wrong. Because you don't read my mail. And I don't think that it comes from dope fiends. I would say that we have a very respectable percentage of people who are not chemically altered, and who are actually intelligent; and not just flakes who bomb it on each other and need to be carried home. It's not like that.

Well, what does your mail say; when people write to you, what do they say?

A lot of weird things, you know, but I wouldn't analyse the mail as coming from a great preponderance of dope fiends, you know.

Were you once into drugs in the sixties?

No.

Never?

No.

Not smoking pot?

No.

What turned you off?

Well, I was never really that interested in it. First of all, at the time when it became totally fashionable, all you had to do was walk down the street and see how people were, and why anybody would want to be that way is amazing, you know, you don't like to carry these people home; I don't like to see them driving on the street, where they can do damage with a large piece of equipment.

You're talking about a lot of drugs; I'm talking about just getting stoned on some grass.

I'm talking about anything that alters your perception to the point where you think you're something other than what you really are, and you start behaving accordingly. And, in Los Angeles, during the height of the drug frenzy, we had people who thought they could fly. People who thought they could walk through walls, and all the rest of the stuff. People who were in communication with the larger portions of the cosmos, because the LSD had convinced them of this.

That's LSD, that's still not grass; the worst thing to do is put all drugs in the same category...

Well, if you want to be clinical about it, you can take each of the drugs, you can analyse what they do to your body, and you can analyse what they've done to the different parts of society that have used them, and depending on what your values are and how much you appreciate the performance of a person in the society who is not drug-altered, you'll be doing these things in different ways. In other words, I think LSD was bad because it confused a lot of people and probably caused brain damage. I mean there are people that I knew then that I see now who used a lot of LSD who are just wasted; they can hardly tie their own shoes, you know, they're gone.

There I agree with you...

Then, you have people who've smoked an awful lot of marijuana because it was really groovy, and it was just for relaxing. And their memories are fucked. They can't remember things; one musician I know lost his sense of rhythm, you know, and they lose equilibrium. But they're very groovy, and they're very laid back and mellow and having a wonderful time, but something was taken out of them, you know, that should have been there in order to make them function better in the society. And the same thing with downers, you know, people just want to take a few downers so that they can feel good; well, they've taken a few downers; they've fallen down and injured themselves and done a bunch of other stupid things. And then there are people who just plain died from it.

What about alcohol?

Same thing. Look, I stay home. Unless I'm on the road I stay home. I'm not much for being gregarious, I don't like chit-chat, I don't like social intercourse. I don't like to be put in a position where I have to deal with other people's emotional freight, and these problems are boiled to the surface of their personality by chemical preparations.

THE MOST NEGLECTED ALBUM OF 1979

37059

DON'T MISS IT IN THE 80's

Virgin THRU Festival

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SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION IN COLOURED SLEEVE
THE MODERN SONG·TAKE ME AWAY

thru RCA Limited

Records & Tapes

inXs are:

Michael Hutchence, Tim Farriss, John Farriss, Andrew Farris, Kirk Pengilly and Garry Beers. The band was formed in Perth when Michael Hutchence met up with the Farriss gang of bros, and then Kirk Pengilly and Garry Beers. After six months of intensive rehearsals they moved to Sydney and were soon selected to support Midnight Oil on an East Coast tour. Chris Murphy spotted inXS first as promising young starters for his rock agency, MMA; then, as a band with the creative ability to join De Luxe.

Come in Annalisse, The Number's up

In the dressing room at the Caringbah Inn on Sydney's Southern beaches, there's a flurry of activity as The Numbers prepare for the gig. While 19 year old Annalise Morrow tunes her Fender Precision bass and sings *Five Letter Word* in a last minute rehearsal of a new number, brother Chris restrings his guitars. Caringbah is usually a good gig for them, and tonight the fans are out in force. And are The Numbers nervous? You betcha. This band's collective stomach *always* churns pre-gig. They treat every gig as if it's a last ditch stand.

When The Numbers started working regularly as a three-piece in late '78, they really impressed a lot of people with their potential. They strove for a degree of professionalism that was rare among the younger bands. When they ran through the crowd, leapt on stage and crashed into the set, they did it with a bright enthusiasm that was almost infectious. At first glance, they were perfect pop fodder - three good-looking kids who took pride in their appearance and jumped around, whipping up enthusiasm and pumping out material that spanned Costello, The Police, The Jam, and original compositions.

The band had potential, that was for sure. Just how long it would take to realise that potential was another matter. After their original, energetic start, the band seemed to settle into some kind of rut.

Since Christmas though, The Numbers have finally blossomed. Suddenly they've become a hard rocking trio with renewed power, bursting through steamlined pop tunes, most of which are written by guitarist Chris.

Despite the fact that they've finally got their presentation and sound together, they still have their unsteady moments. Basically, they sometimes try too hard.

I guess it's got something to do with the metabolism of the band. They've always been as professional as possible; they rarely drink, don't touch drugs, and take incredible pride in their music. And sometimes they seem too tense to achieve job satisfaction. When you're performing in front of people who are just there to get plastered and dance, and couldn't give a stuff about musical appreciation, but you do, that doesn't make for happy little pop stars. Especially when drunken yobos down the front are making lewd comments and lunging for your sister's arse every time she turns around. It's something that, understandably, depresses Chris.

Live, this trio invariably has more happening than most four-piece acts. Simon Vidale is a riveting drummer who makes great use of his toms, shows a definite jazz influence, and still powers along with a vengeance.

Heavily made-up under thick blonde hair that slopes across her eyes, Annalise stumbles about the stage in stiletto-heeled boots, always looking comfortable under polished cotton pants and a sloppy blue shirt belted at the waist. Since taking up the bass six years ago, she's been playing alongside her 22 year old brother, following his lead rather than emphasisting the drummer's beat.

As a co-vocalist, he's unique. Her voice is deep, colourful, but can rise to a strange keening rush as she bursts through Police numbers like *Roxanne* and *What Can I Do* and the reggae influenced *Mr President*.

The originals, written predominantly by Chris, are streamlined and laced with chrome. Tunes like *Take Me Away* and *When I Get Older* shine through polished and precise arrangements.

Jumping around the stage, flicking the hair from his eyes and showering the stage with sweat like a sprinkler, Chris puts everything into his performance, yelling, singing and playing with total intensity. On the other hand, sometimes his stage patter is blurted out with the naivety of someone who wants too much for the audience to like his band. His raves of *"Here's one you might know...This is a political song... This one's a reggae song"*, sometimes sound *too* youthful, *too* passionate.

Still, that's no crime, that's just sheer enthusiasm that only needs the levelling of experience. On their best nights, when band and audience have each other's proper measure, The Numbers turn in a show that's simply stunning - everything gells with all the excitement of great power pop. One day, soon, every night will be like that.

Press Kit.

THE DUGITES - "If it doesn't work out, there's no justice in this business."

Slumped comfortably in a lounge chair in the heart of Planet Studios in Perth is The Dugites' petite, blonde lead-singer, Lynda Nutter. She's very tired.

Opposite her, silently nursing a cup of coffee, is guitarist Gunther Berghoffer. He's tired too. Two fifths of the band have assembled in a studio control room for a little heart-to-heart on The Dugites' debut album before starting another studio stint that could last up to 12 hours, perfecting backing vocals.

Manager Brian Peacock breezes in with more coffee, and he's understandably very eager to talk about the album which is being produced by none other than Bob Andrews, Graham Parker and The Rumour's keyboards man.

The band met Andrews through an old acquaintance, Dave Warner. Andrews was then on the Perth leg of GP and The Rumour's national tour.

As Brian puts it, The Dugites felt an affinity with some of the English producers who were in touch with "modern music".

Andrews was their man as far as The Dugites were concerned. "He's great," says Lynda, "he just fits in so well with the band. We have complimentary attitudes towards the music that we're doing, and he's just improved our songs so much.

"When we looked at the financial side of it," continues Lynda, "it was just as cheap to bring someone from overseas as it was to bring somebody from the East."

I ponder whether the band had considered producing the album themselves, but this brings a flat "No".

"It would be too subjective," explains Gunther. "The album has been done with the international market in mind," offers ever-helpful Brian, "and it needed someone who was really detached from the material to really bring out the best in it."

Gunther: "Someone like Bob who has had years and years experience writing and playing pop songs has been able to suggest changes that we couldn't see ourselves."

Andrews has been in the studio with the band since mid-February recording all originals written by Peter Crosbie.

Planet Studios, I am informed, made a special effort to ship in from Los Angeles a $65,000 mixing desk for The Dugites' album.

The result of that little gadget (actually it's very big) on The Dugites' sound should be very interesting to hear.

According to Lynda, the band has opted for a fair sprinkling of potential singles; up to four, in fact.

One song in particular, *No God, No Master,* is receiving 'alternative' airplay in Melbourne, from FM station 3RRR.

"3RRR have told us that they're getting calls from outer suburban record stores asking for copies of that song, which we gave to the station as a demo tape," says Lynda.

And so to the record deal The Dugites have won themselves. The band has been signed as the headlining act for Michael Browning's new Deluxe Records, which is a coup for any Perth band.

Brian: "Basically, from the two tours The Dugites did in the East there was a very strong buzz in the industry, and a lot of people were chasing the band for record deals.

"Michael came back at the right time when we were on tour with Dave Warner and saw us three times before asking us to sign," reveals Brian.

The band feels the deal with Deluxe Records will be more advantageous than signing direct to a multi-national, as regards promotion, attention, international moves, etc.

The album, which will be self-titled, is slated for mid-May release, and by then The Dugites will be well into their three month national tour.

Tour promoter Michael Chugg was said to be quite chuffed with The

(advertisement)

Dugites when he was them at a recent uproarious farewell gig, and has offered them a support spot on a national tour later in the year. But they've taken the sudden attention in their stride. They're only too aware of the fickle nature of the industry.

However, they're sure the album will establish The Dugites as one of the premier Australian bands of the '80s.

Gunther: "It seems like we've got all the right ingredients for success, and if it doesn't work out there's no justice in the record industry."

Lynda: "If it doesn't work out, then we're in the wrong business."

Rick Southam

With (Toy) Love from New Zealand

What can I possibly say about Toy Love that everyone in New Zealand doesn't already know? They attract a vociferous punk crowd; they play frenzied power-chord pop songs. But, bassist Paul Keen stresses, "We do *not* think of ourselves as a punk band." To which vocalist Chris Knox adds, "We don't think."

It all began back in September 1977 when tech students Alec Bathgate and Mike Dooley wandered into a Dunedin record store seeking a copy of the first UK punk album ever released, The Damned's *Neat Neat Neat*. Instead they met Knox who shared their enthusiasm for English Punk. Aided by bassist Mick Dawson, The Enemy - Knox (vocals), Bathgate (guitar) and Dooley (drums) - debuted eight weeks later with a repertoire of 14 songs, most of them originals.

Based in Dunedin for their first year, The Enemy soon amassed a large South Island following before making the big move to Auckland, where the band continued their success, winning over the Auckland punks.

Shortly after arriving in Auckland, however, Dawson left The Enemy. A number of bassists passed through the ranks, including, for a short spell, Phil Judd, (he of Split Enz fame). When bassist Paul Keen and pianist Jane Walker, both of Christchurch's Basket Cases, joined the band it was decided a name change was appropriate. Toy Love was born.

Throughout 1979 Toy Love built up a fanatical national following in New Zealand, they became *the* rock writers' band and their career certainly hasn't been harmed by receiving managerial help from promoter Larry Young and WEA's Terry Hogan.

Hogan was responsible for getting the band onto vinyl. Their debut single *Rebel* b/w *Squeeze* was not only the best-selling NZ rock single of last year, it also earned the band good reviews in *RAM* and *NME*. A superb double-sider, the single could hold its own on the international market, no worries. Now, on the eve of their Oz visit, another equally impressive double-sider (*Don't Ask Me/Sheep*, produced by Todd Hunter) is about to be released, and in the near future another song, *Frogs*, is to be included on an American compilation album on Bomp Records.

So what's the fuss about? Twelve months ago, Toy Love would have received The Least Likely To Succeed Award. Their drumg-und-drang, ear splitting cacophony was hardly the type of material to capture national attention, as good as it was. The success of *Rebel* of course, has helped but basically the band has succeeded on their determination to crack it without compromise. "We're not superficial like Th'Dudes, Sheerlux or Mi-Sex," Knox says. And the difference between Toy Love and that lot? "We make more mistakes," he shrugs.

It look a while for Toy Love to transcend their punk audience, but the fact is that, despite a punk approach to rock, they write and play *pop* music. Strong melodies coupled with nifty lyrics delivered in a raunchy rock style.

If I had to choose an established band with which to compare Toy Love, it would have to be The Ramones. Not that Toy Love sound anything like The Ramones. What they share, however, is a sense of fun and a preference for keeping their songs down around the two minute mark.

Although the band is going to Oz with the aid of new manager Michael Browning (ex-AC/DC), they intend keeping a low profile (avoiding the over-hype which killed Hello Sailor) until their time comes. My bet is that it won't be *too* long before their time comes. My you Ockers are sure to have some fun right from the start.

John Dix

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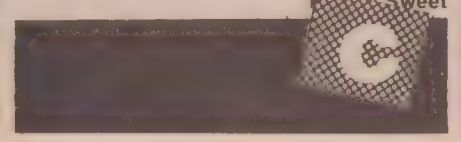
OZ SINGLES

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE	Queen
2	(2)	DREAMING MY DREAMS WITH YOU	Colleen Hewett
3	(3)	PLEASE DON'T GO	KC & The Sunshine Band
4	(5)	DO THAT TO ME ONE MORE TIME	Captain & Tennille
5	(4)	BLAME IT ON THE BOOGIE	Jacksons
6	(9)	ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL PT. II	Pink Floyd
7	(8)	HE'S MY NUMBER ONE	Christie Allen
8	(6)	DON'T STOP TILL YOU GET ENOUGH	Michael Jackson
9	(15)	•ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE	Monty Python
10	(7)	ESCAPE	Rupert Holmes
11	(11)	SARA	Fleetwood Mac
12	(17)	•COWARD OF THE COUNTY	Kenny Rogers
13	(12)	LOCOMOTION	Ritz
14	(19)	•MONEY	The Flying Lizards
15	(35)	•DAY TRIP TO BANGOR	Fiddler's Dram
16	(10)	MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE	The Police
17	(—)	•I GOT YOU	Split Enz
18	(28)	•WALKING ON THE MOON	The Police
19	(21)	HAVE A CIGAR	Rosebud
20	(18)	CARRIE	Cliff Richard
21	(23)	SPACE INVADERS	Player
22	(14)	BABE	Styx
23	(13)	STAY WITH ME TILL DAWN	Judie Tzuke
24	(33)	•ROCK WITH YOU	Michael Jackson
25	(26)	WHATEVER YOU WANT	Status Quo
26	(30)	DRAC'S BACK	Andy Forray
27	(16)	HOT TOWN	Jon English
28	(20)	RAINBOW CONNECTION	Kermit
29	(25)	IF IT'S LOVE YOU WANT	Edith Bliss
30	(29)	SEPTEMBER MORN	Neil Diamond
31	(36)	•FLY TOO HIGH	Janis Ian
32	(32)	UNDER FIRE	Jackie
33	(31)	YOU'RE ONLY LONELY	J D Souther
34	(—)	•ROMEO'S TUNE	Steve Forbert
35	(22)	C'MON AUSSIE C'MON	Mojo Singers
36	(—)	STRANGERS ON A TRAIN	The Sports
37	(38)	I LOVE YOU SO REBECCA	Johnny Chester & Hotspur
38	(39)	LONDON CALLING	The Clash
39	(24)	VIDEO KILLED THE RADIO STAR	The Buggles
40	(—)	I GO TO PIECES	[illegible] Sweet



OZ ALBUMS

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	THE WALL	Pink Floyd
2	(2)	REGGATTA BE BLANC	The Police
3	(6)	TUSK	Fleetwood Mac
4	(3)	SEPTEMBER MORN	Neil Diamond
5	(7)	OFF THE WALL	Michael Jackson
6	(5)	DYNASTY	Kiss
7	(4)	20 GOLDEN GREATS	Creedance Clearwater Revival
8	(10)	THE ROSE	Bette Midler
9	(13)	MAD LOVE	Linda Ronstadt
10	(11)	THE B-52'S	The B-52's
11	(12)	LIFE OF BRIAN	Original Soundtrack
12	(15)	TRUE COLOURS	Split Enz
13	(9)	THE LONG RUN	Eagles
14	(8)	ELO'S GREATEST HITS	
15	(22)	•THE PRETENDERS	
16	(17)	LONDON CALLING	The Clash
17	(21)	KENNY	Kenny Rogers
18	(14)	THE BEST OF SKYHOOKS	
19	(24)	•OUTLANDOS D'AMOUR	The Police
20	(19)	WELCOME TO THE CRUISE	Judie Tzuke
21	(25)	NIGHT RAINS	Janis Ian
22	(16)	DISCOVERY	ELO
23	(18)	BEE GEES GREATEST HITS	
24	(29)	•DESTINY	Jacksons
25	(20)	JOHNNY MATHIS SOUVENIR ALBUM	
26	(—)	•AGAINST THE WIND	Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band
27	(33)	•DAMN THE TORPEDOES	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
28	(23)	THE BEST OF THE SOLO ALBUMS	Kiss
29	(27)	WHATEVER YOU WANT	Status Quo
30	(28)	NO NUKES	Various
31	(26)	THE BEST OF KENNY ROGERS	
	(37)	•THE SPECIALS	
33	(31)	THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLE	Gary Numan
34	(40)	•THE MOTELS	
35	(36)	NIGHTOUT	Ellen Foley
36	(32)	CORNERSTONE	Styx
37	(—)	BUT THE LITTLE GIRLS UNDERSTAND	The Knack
38	(—)	COUNTRY PRIDE	Charley Pride
39	(35)	BACKSTAGE PASS	The Little River Band
40	(38)	GRAFFITI CRIMES	Mi-Sex

UK SINGLES

This Week	Last		
1	(19)	•ATOMIC	Blondie
2	(1)	COWARD OF THE COUNTY	Kenny Rogers
3	(8)	•CARRIE	Cliff Richard
4	(2)	TOO MUCH TOO YOUNG	Specials
5	(5)	AND THE BEAT GOES ON	Whispers
6	(7)	ROCK WITH YOU	Michael Jackson
7	(4)	CAPTAIN BEAKY	Keith Michell
8	(29)	•TAKE THAT LOOK OFF YOUR FACE	Marti Webb
9	(11)	I CAN'T STAND UP FOR FALLING DOWN	Elvis Costello
10	(13)	BABY I LOVE YOU	Ramones
11	(3)	SOMEONE'S LOOKING AT YOU	Boomtown Rats
12	(12)	SO GOOD TO BE BACK HOME AGAIN	Tourists
13	(18)	•GHOST RIDERS IN THE SKY	Shadows
14	(—)	•TOGETHER WE ARE BEAUTIFUL	Fern Kinney
15	(21)	•LIVING IN THE PLASTIC AGE	Buggles
16	(9)	I HEAR YOU NOW	Jon & Vangelis
17	(6)	I'M IN THE MOOD FOR DANCING	Nolans
18	(—)	•GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS	Peter Gabriel
19	(27)	•ON THE RADIO	Donna Summer
20	(26)	•SO LONELY	Police
21	(10)	SAVE ME	Queen
22	(20)	BABE	Styx
23	(16)	7 TEEN	Regents
24	(—)	•HANDS OFF SHE'S MINE	The Beat
25	(—)	•DO THAT TO ME ONE MORE TIME	Captain & Tennille
26	(17)	THREE MINUTE HERO	Selector
27	(—)	STOMP	Brothers Johnson
28	(—)	HOLDIN' ON	Tony Rallo
29	(—)	SINGING THE BLUES	Dave Edmunds
30	(—)	CUBA	Gibson Brothers

UK ALBUMS

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	LAST DANCE	Various
2	(15)	•GET HAPPY	Elvis Costello
3	(—)	•TOO MUCH PRESSURE	Selector
4	(2)	ONE STEP BEYOND	Madness
5	(3)	PRETENDERS	Pretenders
6	(4)	REGATTA DE BLANC	Police
7	(10)	OFF THE WALL	Michael Jackson
8	(5)	SHORT STORES	Jon & Vangelis
9	(6)	KENNY	Kenny Rogers
10	(7)	THE SPECIALS	
11	(—)	•TELL ME ON A SUNDAY	Marti Webb
12	(—)	•STRING OF HITS	Shadows
13	(9)	I'M THE MAN	Joe Jackson
14	(28)	•THE WALL	Pink Floyd
15	(—)	•LIGHT UP THE NIGHT	Brothers Johnson
16	(14)	JUST FOR YOU	Des O'Connor
16	(16)	SEPTEMBER MORN	Neil Diamond
18	(25)	•EAT TO THE BEAT	Blondie
19	(12)	THE NOLAN SISTERS	
20	(—)	•FLOGGING A DEAD HORSE	Sex Pistols
21	(23)	SUNBURN	Various
22	(—)	•SOMETIMES YOU WIN	Dr Hook
23	(16)	BEE GEES GREATEST HITS	
24	(26)	CAPTAIN BEAKY & HIS BAND	Keith Michell
25	(13)	PERMANENT WAVES	Rush
26	(11)	END OF THE CENTURY	Ramones
27	(—)	CATCHING THE SUN	Spyro Gyro
28	(—)	ROCK&ROLL JUVENILE	Cliff Richard
29	(18)	ABBA'S GREATEST HITS VOL.2	
30	(22)	GOLDEN COLLECTION	Charley Pride

US SINGLES

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE	Queen
2	(3)	LONGER	Dan Fogelberg
3	(4)	YES I'M READY	Teri DeSario
4	(2)	CRUISIN'	Smokey Robinson
5	(7)	ON THE RADIO	Donna Summer
6	(6)	ROCK WITH YOU	Michael Jackson
7	(9)	WORKING MY WAY BACK TO YOU	Spinners
8	(10)	DESIRE	Andy Gibb
9	(5)	COWARD OF THE COUNTY	Kenny rogers
10	(14)	ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL	Pink Floyd
11	(12)	AN AMERICAN DREAM	The Dirt Band
12	(15)	HIM	Rupert Holmes
13	(8)	DO THAT TO ME ONE MORE TIME	Captain & Tennille
14	(16)	SEPTEMBER MORN	Neil Diamond
15	(20)	•HOW DO I MAKE YOU	Linda Ronstadt
16	(18)	SECOND TIME AROUND	Shalamar
17	(17)	DAYDREAM BELIEVER	Anne Murray
18	(23)	•TOO HOT	Kool & The Gang
19	(11)	ROMEO'S TUNE	Steve Forbert
20	(22)	"99"	Toto
21	(26)	•REFUGEE	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
22	(13)	SARA	Fleetwood Mac
23	(19)	DEJA VU	Dionne Warwick
24	(25)	WHEN I WANTED YOU	Barry Manilow
25	(—)	•SPECIAL LADY	Ray Goodman & Brown
26	(28)	HEARTBREAKER	Pat Benatar
27	(—)	GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT	Chuck Mangione
28	(21)	THIS IS IT	Kenny Loggins
29	(24)	I WANNA BE YOUR LOVER	Prince
30	(—)	RIDE LIKE THE WIND	Christopher Cross

US ALBUMS

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	THE WALL	Pink Floyd
2	(2)	DAMN THE TORPEDOES	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
3	(3)	OFF THE WALL	Michael Jackson
4	(4)	PHOENIX	Dan Fogelberg
5	(5)	THE LONG RUN	The Eagles
6	(6)	ON THE RADIO	Donna Summer
7	(13)	•PERMANENT WAVES	Rush
8	(8)	CORNERSTONE	Styx
9	(14)	•THE WHISPERS	
10	(10)	SEPTEMBER MORN	Neil Diamond
11	(11)	THE ROSE	Original Soundtrack
12	(7)	KENNY	Kenny Rogers
13	(9)	TUSK	Fleetwood Mac
14	(12)	FREEDOM AT POINT ZERO	Jefferson Starship
15	(—)	•FUN AND GAMES	Chuck Mangione
16	(15)	IN THROUGH THE OUT DOOR	Led Zeppelin
17	(18)	KEEP THE FIRE	Kenny Loggins
18	(—)	•BABE LE STRANGE	Heat
19	(21)	IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT	Pat Benatar
20	(16)	GOLD & PLATINUM	Lynyrd Skynyrd Band
21	(19)	MIDNIGHT MAGIC	Commodores
22	(23)	PRINCE	
23	(—)	•BUT THE LITTLE GIRLS UNDERSTAND	The Knack
24	(17)	BEE GEES GREATEST HITS	
25	(—)	•LADIES NIGHT	Kool & Gang
26	(20)	NO NUKES	Various
27	(24)	LIVE RUST	Neil Young
28	(29)	FLIRTIN' WITH DISASTER	Molly Hatchet
29	(—)	LOVE STINKS	Geils Band
30	(22)	DEGUELLO	ZZ Top

VINYL SING

Burning the hybrid

THE RADIATORS
Feel The Heat (WEA)

The Radiators are one of the most fascinating hybrids I've come across, ever. They're a band as committed to atmospheric, spacey, contemporary technoflash arrangements as say, Mi-Sex. At the same time, they're ever firmly plugged into the great Australian heartbeat of rock - the pumpin' rocka' chugga-boogie. With The Radiators, you know two things are certain - there's a power chord and a pumping beat around every other corner, and, around the next corner there's a precision-tooled arrangement of keyboards and sound effects guaranteed to lift the common boogie into the majestic or soaring category.

The words, too. What at first sounds like sex 'n' drugs 'n' rock 'n'roll slogans turns out to be a series of sharply crafted vignettes that reveal the writers in the band, Brian Nichol and Geoff Turner, as having finely developed sensibilities of observation and calculated cynicism. *Summer Holiday*, for instance, is the story of the all Australian wombat - eats, roots, shoots and leaves. What you get in the music though, is a weirdly wonderful mix of ocker mating cries and a sublime lazy, hazy keyboard break, all firmly attached to a power-chording stomping beat. And *Reason*, which starts off as a well-arranged, loping blues, then suddenly breaks into a sound-effect laden romping rondo. *Numbers* introduces a purely technoflash synthesiser middle into a chanting, boogie set-piece.

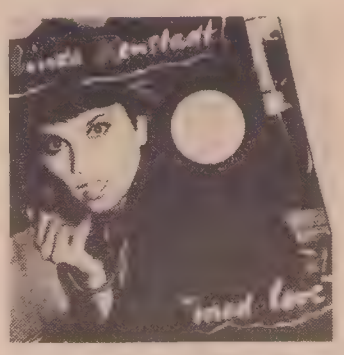
Taking the album as a whole, the straight-forward drive of the first single, *Comin' Home* is unrepresentative of the intricacies the band has developed over the past year. Like, in *17*, where they succeed in pulling off an affected, yobbish vocal performance, power chords *and* a multi-layered stratospheric arrangement. Or the keyboard and vocal echo-effects of *Hit And Run*, where the lyrics further the cause of male chauvanism, but the delivery and musical arrangements underline a completely constrasting sensitivity.

And then there's *Nancy Can't Dance*, which maybe would never have been written, if *Summertime Blues* hadn't already been. Plus, two taut rockers in *All Of Your Love* and *It's Easy*. And, the finely-flanged hiss and roar of *Radiation*, the band's almost obligatory end-of-the-world song.

Contemporary hybrids for modern rock mutants. The Radiators are a winning combination.

The bonus 'R-rated' single (two dirty rock ditties - *Fess' Song* and *Gimme Head*) is a passable studio representation of what, live, whips the band's audiences into screaming lunatics every time. It's the sort of straight ahead dirty loud rock with which they started, but the arrangments on *Feel The Heat* is where they're heading.

Anthony O'Grady



LINDA RONSTADT
Mad Love (Elektra-Asylum)

Can it be that failing audience figures and the general mad, impetuous rush of time have convinced the LA music monolith that it is, actually, 1980? Any day now the Eagles will appear with safety pins through their battered noses - and La Ronstadt has broken the ice with an album that makes a brave attempt to come to grips with modern, apres-punk music. Mind you, the recipe is basically *Triple the number of Elvis Costello covers*, but Linda sure tries to get some energy and excitement going on at least half the numbers. Unfortunately, old habits die hard - she'll be wailing tough on a number like Billy Steinberg's *How Do I Make You*, and then suddenly whack in a wobbly *"Waaooooh"* that should have been buried with the Stone Poneys. It's touching how the band (the familiar session crowd of Dan Dugmore, Mark Goldenberg, Danny Kortchmar - guitars, Bill Payne - keyboards, Bob Glaub - bass, and Russ Kunkel - drums) try to get into the new wave feel... they even speed up now and again.

Cheap cracks and painful truths aside, this is in some ways Ronstadt's best album since *Heart Like A Wheel*, simply because she's got away from the formula material of sedate rockers and tearful ballads, (though the single, *Mad Love*, and *Cost Of Love* - both by Goldenberg - fit the first category, and Neil Young's *Look Out For My Love*, the second). The large slab of Costello is enterprising, but terribly revealing. One: he's a giant among pygmies in the songwriting dept. - Goldenberg has one musically striking song, *Justine*, but his ideas and command of language are puny compared to the sharp and catchy lines of *Party Girl, Girls Talk*, and *Talking In The Dark*. Two: Linda, as she demonstrated with her pretty but empty rendition of *Alison* on *Simple Dreams*, either hasn't a clue what Elvis is on about, or is incapable of expressing it.

Even so, to be fair, with the exception of *Party Girl* - she does it nice. Perhaps she was psyched out by the lyric... *"They say I'm nothing but a party girl...Maybe someday we can go hiding from this world/Maybe I'll never get over this change in style..."*

I hope she does: there's a lovely singer inside the doll.

Greg Taylor

MIKE BATT
Tarot Suite (Epic)

As Mike Batt points out in his notes to the album on the inner sleeve, *Tarot Suite* is not meant to be a thorough exploration of the complexities of the Tarot, but merely a personal series of ten musical impressions of the 22 major arcana Tarot cards.

The central image pulling the concept of the suite together is the first card, the Fool. As each musical piece develops, we find the Fool further along the road to self-awareness and understanding until reaching, as Batt's liner note says, "the final perfection of the state of man and the universe... the happy ending of an episode." If there is any message at all in the album, this is it.

Then again, most of any intended message from Batt is left to be made by the music. The lyrics are kept to the minimum, with only four songs against six musical pieces. The first, *Imbecile*, featuring the tortured warbly voice of Roger Chapman, works very well, with an argument between the first two cards, Fool and Magician. The Fool comes out on top. The song for the Lovers card is just that, *Lady Of The Dawn*, with all the appropriate cliches - which work alright if you can put up with lines like *"Well I like you for your body / but I love you 'cos you're wise"*. It doesn't sound so bad in context though, and Batt puts in a creditable vocal performance as a classic, soft-centre lover. *Losing Your Way In The Rain* opens side two and is an impression rather than interpretation of the Hermit card; although musically sound and sung well by ex-Zombie Colin Blunstone, it's the weakest lyrically. The final vocal track sees Chapman back on vocals as the Fool, not necessarily having attained Nirvana but having become at least a more complete individual, feeling no longer dependent on anyone else for answers but still dreaming; which, I suppose, brings him full circle back to being the Fool, an idealist in the real world.

Batt's biggest asset has always been his ability to arrange and orchestrate for both rock bands and sympony orchestras, so the backings of the songs and the musical pieces here are a real tours de force. In this, he has left the majority of recent concept album classical rock mixtures for dead. Most gratifying of all, the man doesn't try to stretch out his ideas over a double album; he puts in a set of tight well-constructed, sparklingly arranged pieces of music without the boring repetitiousness from which, say, *War Of The Worlds* suffered.

Batt has also gathered together an impressive battery of rock performers, including Tony McPhee, Jim Cregan, Mel Collins, and especially Rory Gallagher, who plays some knockout guitar licks in the introduction, *The Journey Of A Fool* and on *Tarota*. The album works, by building musical paintings. And although the emphasis is often on the orchestra, the power and intelligent use of the rhythm section and the rock musos pull it right back into rock.

Tarot Suite is pretentious as all hell and miles from what's going down in the traps or anywhere else, but it is an exceptionally well-constructed musical exercise and deserves any sucess it gets. Add another album to your flogged-to-death list, but buy it anyway.

Michael Smith

THE RAMONES
End Of The Century (Sire)

Fans of both The Ramones and Phil Spector could see this collaboration as inspired, at least on paper. Put one of the world's great garage bands whose inspiration comes from early '60s rock'n'roll with that genre's most famous producer; perch da bruddas on top of the "wall of sound". Others, viewing The Ramones' failure to significantly broaden their music after half a dozen albums, and Spector's erratic later work (including notable disasters with the Beatles and Leonard Cohen), would assume the marriage was arranged by desperate accountants.

It certainly is *different* - for both parties. The basic primitive Ramone sound has been decked out with the traditional Spector Grand Canyon drums, reverbed handclaps, strings and saxes - de kitsch, but the flat-out guitars of Johnny and Dee Dee are kept right up front, and overdubbed into a glorious, dirty, threshing orchestra. The vocals are much more deployed - you can really hear Joey for a change, and there's some pretty fair early Beach Boy (!) harmonies, most memorably on the slow *Danny Says*, and the old Spector classic *Baby, I Love You*. Spector seems to have introduced changes without trying to swamp the band - a welcome change. Perhaps they all do think the same way.

They sure agree that early '60s rock was great, and recent times full of dreck. From the cameo DJ introduction to *Do You Remember Rock'n'Roll Radio*, through *Danny Says*, *Baby, I Love You*, to *Rock 'n'Roll Highschool*, it's simple celebration.

The Return Of Jackie And Judy has the same musical feel, but the lyric is definitely late '70s: *"Jackie's scalping tickets/Judy's getting harassed/They both got kicked outside/Didn't have a backstage pass"*. There's a couple (*I'm Affected* and *This Ain't Havana*) of what might be called love songs, for The Ramones; a reasonable rendition of their old junk rave (*Chinese Rock*); and two expressions of the great sorrow The Ramones feel at having missed out on the Vietnam war - *"Got a country you wanna protect/But your army is more likely to defect" (Let's Go); "Everybody wants an explanation/Got no love for the enemy nation/You gotta fight to stay independent/I've got my pride and I'm gonna defend it" (High Risk Insurance)*.

Relative newcomers to Ramone Appreciation will probably find this the most accessible album, especially if they like a little panache on their punk. Hard core fans should definitely give it a listen, although it's unlikely to replace *The Ramones* and *The Ramones Leave Home* in their heart of hearts.

Greg Taylor

GODLEY & CREME
Freeze Frame (Polydor)

This is the third album from the unjustly forgotten (at least in Australia) 5cc splinter of the 10cc line up. Always the more experimental two (*read* willing to take uncommercial risks), Kevin Godley and Lol Creme split when their pet studio project, the Gizmo, started to take on epic proportions to the exclusion of anything else, specifically 10cc. The split was amicable, but both sides lost in the deal. 10cc lost its

innovativeness to a great degree (it was Lol Creme who suggested putting the wall of voices behind Eric Stewart's ballad *I'm Not In Love*), and Godley/Creme lost their sizeable pop following, especially as their gizmo project became *Conseuqences*, a triple album of the most stunning virtuoso studio production and playing, but too much hard work for the great mass of listeners. *Consequences* wasn't expected to be a big seller and, more's the pity, it wasn't. Next came *L*, again chocablock full of brilliant ideas, hooks, catchy melodies and bitingly witty lyrics dressed up in a confection of musical styles and pastiches, but, at least here, totally lost in the racks.

So here's the third album and another crack at retrieving an audience. And it's stunning. Everyone should get it. It's simply magnificent. Truly. I cannot do this album justice in words, because it is the sounds, the music that makes it a marvel, and it's hard enough to have to pin down music in a review as it is without being confronted with so much innovation and imagination on one piece of vinyl like this. If you loved the early 10cc, it's all here, the sparkling arrangements as styles sweep across each other, punctuating the sting of the lyric line, as in the opening cut *An Englishman In New York*, which churns through scathing lyrics on the subject of New York in the fashion of the tough *One Night In Paris*. But this is no rerun. There are styles and tricks of stylistic splintering similar to the old 10cc, but Godley & Creme are not going over old ground. Everything that has gone before is pushed another league forward. Voices become demented and mechanical in *I Pity Inanimate Objects*, the singer asking: *"Is a tree as a rocking horse/ An ambition fulfilled?/And is the sawdust jealous?"* The twists in perspective constantly force re-evaluation of context in the most unique way (something Zappa and a lot of others have been trying to do with music for years). *Random Brainwave* looks at the unseen flaw in the machinery - individuality/ P.E.R.S.O.N.A.L.I.T.Y. - while *Freeze Frame* explores phobias and fixations as the narrator slips into paranoia (*"Going down like Neanderthal Man in the chart"* - now *that's* witty). But you shold hear the music! Stunning harmonies, beautiful sliding guitar gizmo sounds, percussion playing par excellance. Magic.

If you want to hear where pop music could be going, get this LP. It's not following any current trend and I suppose it's probably too slick and manufactured for today's tastes, but it is a real listening experience all the same. The only good thing to come out of the original 10cc split was that now we have 20cc's worth of good music to choose from. Beg, borrow or steal the first two albums before they disappear altogether. Actually, *Consequences* is already deleted. Our loss.

Michael Smith

LENE LOVICH

Flex (Stiff)

The first Lovich album, *Stateless*, was a near-flawless, pop-perfect, complete portrait of Lene as surrealistic modern day Continental vamp. Childhood traumas partially peeled away, present optimisms boldly stated, a wildly wonderful quavering voice wobbling and sliding over the beat. *Lucky Number* was duly a big hit, and now comes LP No. 2, wherein the frivolities of the likes of *Lucky Number* are discarded for a more elaborate aural presentation. *Flex*, you feel, is a 'serious' work. The assiduous attention to detail with which the rhythm section goes about its business of putting power into the thudding metronomic beats; the swelling keyboards and soaring choruses that build into the concetrated slabs of atmosphere Lene's often brazen lyrics and unusual vocal inflections need. The only problem is, whereas *Stateless* gave the impression of a girl and band experimenting boldly, *Flex* bends towards such stolid preciseness it often creates a void between the songs and the listener. Like Sparks before her, Lene Lovich may have painted herself right into a corner while perfecting her art.

On the positive side - ten songs and at least six of them are prime killers. *Bird Song* and *Angels* are closest to the spirit of *Stateless*; *Wonderful One* has a chorus that's guaranteed to jerk your head backwards. *The Night, The Freeze*, and *You Can't Kill Me* are gothic masterpieces - Lene's voice rising like a spectre from a sepulchre through swirling mists of synthesiser, underpinned with basso profundo chanting and crashing percussion.

She's an enigma, is Lene Lovich, a vamp in a wedding gown whose novelty value is offset by strong assertions of serious female originality. *Flex* sees her bending from one to the other, a difficult balancing act and certinly not one that can be maintained over three albums.

Anthony O'Grady

TANYA TUCKER Tear Me Apart (MCA)

Even as a child, Tanya Tucker's sophisticated vocal abilities rocketed her to stardom within the sphere of country music.

In her teenage years, Tanya attempted to broaden her sphere of appeal, fusing her country singing style with a West Coast brand of rock, that, some critics claimed, threatened to drown the singer's vocal abilities in a gushing flood or Eagles style arrangements.

In *Tear Me Apart*, producer Mike Chapman has thrown her a lifeboat. In fact, Tanya's surrounded by guiding lights - Norman Seeff photographed her for the album cover. His portrait, printed in warm sepia tones, captures Ms Tucker's sassy dynamism mid-swirl. Chinnichap have taken over the singer's management, and donated two songs.

Mike Chapman has ensured that the music - always beautifully played - remains in the background; Tanya's voice is rich enough to support the whole song and dance. On the opening track, *Blind Love*, the arrangements are full bodied, even lush, but pushed gently to the background, allowing Tucker's voice full command of the stage, which she fills abundantly; growling or whispering, her voice has a powerful presence.

In the next track, Tanya's vocals sway gently to the rhythm of the Chinnichap penned *Lay Back In The Arms Of Someone* (originally recorded by Smokie), subtly enticing listeners to do as the song title tells them.

Somebody Must Have Loved You Right Last Night pares the accompaniment down even further. It begins with a simple combination of keyboards and vocals, invoking a gentle, intimate atmosphere. Chapman uses this technique frequently, stripping songs down to the simplest elements, allowing them to offset one another. Steve Goldstein's flowing piano and the crystalline tones of Jerry Swallow's acoustic guitar, dobro and mandolin playing are the perfect complement for Tucker's rich contralto.

Very few singers could compete (or would want to) with Scott McKenzie's original version of *San Francisco (Be Sure To Wear Some Flowers In Your Hair)*, the Haight-Ashbury anthem of the '60s, but Tucker pulls it off, giving the song her own personality.

Tear Me Apart features several rockers; the title track is a growling number written by Chinnichap and delivered in a gutsy style reminiscent of early Elvis (no, not Costello - the *original* one); *Better Late Than Ever* is a country rocker and *By Day By Night* a New Orleans toe tapper.

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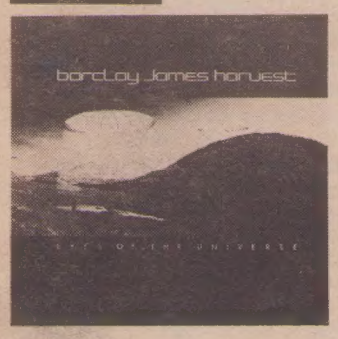
I've Never Saïd No Before is Tucker's showpiece. Starting as hardly more than a tremble, her voice gathers strength as it wrings the emotive possibilities from every word. Her voice weaves a spell, enticing other instruments to join her. Strings and backing vocals provide a textural motif, and then there's a distant single drum pound, once repeated, a momentary ticking sound, and then just *that* voice.

Tear Me Apart ends on an appropriate sound. As Tucker finishes singing *By Day By Night*, she murmurs something to herself. Right to the last almost inaudible sound, her voice demands, seduces one to listen.

Miranda Brown



BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST
Eyes Of The Universe (Polydor)

This is the thirteenth album to come from this little known (in Australia) English band, and the first to feature the reduced line up of John Lees (guitars/keyboards/bass/vocals), Mel Pritchard (drums/percussion) and Les Holroyd (bass/guitars/keyboards/vocals) since the departure, after 14 years of this most stable of line ups, of keyboard player 'Woolly' Wolstenholme to pursue a solo career. Even in England this band has tended to remain in the rather undistinguished second league of bands, perhaps unfairly, never managing to break through that barrier to the major legue, although they've been a progressive music concert favourite for years, with annual sellout tours of England and the Continent. Still, the *big album* has eluded them, and unfortuantely, I don't thing this particular album will change things very dramatically for them, here or in England. Which is a pity, as it's a tight, polished, professional, musically competent, commercially accessible, although rather low-keyed piece of work.

The problem with it is that, others have already reaped the harvest (no pun intended) of any original ideas this group may have had over the years, and much of this album is derivative in teh extreme - you've heard it all before, pure and simple. Throughout, the album seems to recall some of the better elements of some of the best groups to make music through the '70s. The opener, *Love On The Line*, starts well with some nice electronic keyboard work and crashing, portenious chords, but the vocal is just so close to CSN&Y (not always a bad thing) that all the huge dynamics seem undermined by its sweetness. Similarly, the witty collection of meaningless oh-so-trendy-hip-disco jargon that makes up the lyric, of *Alright Down Get Boogie*, that could have been a cleverly scathing send-up of that scene is played by the band so sincerely and with such musical taste, that the point is lost completely. It's all just too seriously taken. *The Song (They Love To Sing)* comes neatly out of the souring guitar work of the previous track into a subtle piece of subdued keyboard that is so obviously *Selling England By The Pound* - period GEnesis with counterpoint vocal, you think you've put another album on! The give-away is the Bee Gee'd vocal (minus the warble, thankfully), but this is straight Tony Banks, every bit of the keyboard work. They do it well, but you've heard the original a long time ago. *Skin Flick* is an unashamedly naive, romanticised look at the world of magazine nudes. It's played so straight, it's laughable - musically competent but lyrically disastrous - with orchestra courtesy Moody Blues of *Question* - days, alternating with the Latin side of 10cc, with appropriate punning imagery all delivered totally deadpan.

Play To The World is Pink Floyd - straight. No wonder they hope this one will crack it for them. If originality doesn't score, try familiarity. BJH are a good surrogate, but ksoft-centered.

Michael Smith

THE HEADBOYS
The Headboys (RSO)

Their single, *The Shape Of Things To Come*, never was a blockbuster in Oz; likewise, so far, the album. Which just goes to show there's damn little justice after all, 'cos *The Headboys* offers so many variations, bursts with so much energy, it's hard to let your attention wander throughout. There's straight rock played with Who-type grandeur, and the passion of anthems on such trax as *Shape, Changing With The Times* and *Stepping Stones*. There are keyboard-heavy songs which evoke the scope and finesse of a Genesis.

The comparisons, by the way, are just to mark the boundaries The Headboys operate within. The Headboys don't deal in hand-me-down cliches; they're a band who are truly multi-directional, and their album covers a cross-section of ideas, full of imagination. Their lyrical preoccupations are equally diverse - love songs, serious songs, comic songs, even a bit of good natured youthful smut here and there.

They don't come much better first up than *The Headboys*.

D.J.

THE DIRT BAND
An American Dream (UA)

In 13 years of touring and recording, a band has lots of time for experimentation and changes.

On *An American Dream's* first release in '79, the Dirt Band's history read like the queen's family tree. Scores of musicians. Jackson Browne amongst them, had come and gone, they'd played jugband, vaudeville, country, bluegrass, gone electric and back again, and even changed their name by chopping off the *Nitty Gritty* prefix

This first album features, thankfully, the same line up, with the nucleic members contributing myriad skills. Jimmie Fadden plays guitar, harp, and sings lead and backing vocals; John McUen plays banjo, mandolin, dobro, lap steel and guitar, while Jeff Hanna shares production with Bob Edwards (who produced *The Dirt Band*) sings lead and backing vocals, and plays guitar. Merel Bregante and Al Garth, former drummer and horn player respectively of Loggins and Messina, continue the association they began with Fadden and co. on the last album.

An American Dream (perhaps a comment on the band's till then elusive search for solidity) is an eclectic album, parading the many styles and instrumental skills at the musicians' fingertips.

The opening and title track (with Linda Ronstadt singing harmonies) has a Latin feel to it; the closing number *Woverton Mountain*, a calypso feel. Sandwiched in between is the moody *Dance The Night Away* (tailor-made for a Rondstadt rendition), a limp version of *New Orleans* (the only dud on the album), a laid back rocker a la West Coast and even two disco numbers. In *Happy Feet*, the Dirt Band attack the dancing beat with hillbilly frivolity, while on *Jas'moon*, they proffer a more sophisticated approach. A racing instrumental, it's something akin to the disco theme music from *Midnight Express*, except it's all man-made...Funny how one expects electronic moog or synthesizer to make all disco sounds nowadays.

It's the playing, not the songs that gives *An American Dream* its vibrant qualities. The saucy cornet lines on *Take Me Back* bring the jaunty song to life; likewise the violin solo and banjo playing on *Jas'moon*, and the ripples of harp and mandolin on *Wolverton Mountain*. The clean production and light hearted rhythms accentuate the warmth of the instrumental sounds.

An American Dream is not an innovative album, nor an exciting one. But it is cheery, enjoyable and well executed.

Miranda Brown

SINGLES

Skyhooks - This Town Is Boring/Is This Too Much? (Mushroom): A rousing anthem that would threaten to put life into the most boring party. Ringing guitar riff, wittily tooled lyrics, delivered strongly. A hookline in the chorus that could beach a whale. Energy is the keynote here, the 'Hooks have it in abundance and they don't mind sharing. *Is This Too Much?* is an electronic outing from Greg Macainsh that layers syn-beats under girls crying in simulated (?) pain. Maybe Zappa influenced? Maybe has had a more stimulating private life than anyone ever imagined.

The Aliens - Follow That Girl/The Hyding Of Dr. Jeckyl (Mushroom): Momentous pop on a magnetic scale. The beat has been stripped back to bare essentials, the keyboard riff ricochets against the walls, the vocals come screaming out of the mix at approximately 100 kms per minute. It's just a great rush of sound. *The Hyding Of Dr. Jeckyl* is a snarling evocation of a monster. Just love those sinisteroso power chords and Split Enz-ish vocals.

The Pretenders - Brass In Pocket/Swinging London/Nervous But Shy (Sire): *Brass In Pocket* is *the* single of the moment. There are no other contenders, everyone else is just this month's pretender. Chrissie Hynde has a voice that smokily swaggers and struts, that inspires heat in the loins and a chill in the heart. To listen five times is to be addicted forever. The B-side showcases a little-lauded side of The Pretenders - they love doing instrumentals, to show

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RUN BY MUSICIANS FOR MUSICIANS

off guitarist James Honeyman-Scott's virtuosities. *Swinging London* is an early Shadows type choon, with James getting Hank Marvin's scratchy Stratocaster tone and treble just right. *Nervous But Shy* is, believe it or not, a near enough direct lift of the incidental film music Ray Davies wrote for the *Percy* film, back in 1970.

Street Corner Jack - Wrong With You/Everyday's A Party: Independent release from Adelaide band. Studio dynamics aren't exactly Eastlake, but the somewhat Paul McCartney-ish melody of *Wrong With You* is near irresistable. *Party* livens up with the arrival of a wonderfully inspired and loony keyboard interlude. They're a band to be watched with interest, even the label copy is worth reading. (*270 Portbush Rd, Beulah Park SA 5067*).

John Paul Young - Hot For You Baby/I Don't Want To Lose You (Alberts): Roaring guitars, a beat strong enough to support the weight of an elephant, one of the most colourful vocals he's ever put down. I mean, *Hot For You Baby* is exactly what it sets out to be - surefire, foot-tapping, instantly memorable modern pop. *Lose You* is the sort of ballad young lovers grope to in parked cars.

Donna Summer - On The Radio/There Will Always Be You (Casablanca): *On The Radio* is probably the worst load of schlock Donna has ever given her name to. Toneless vocals, automat funk-beat, dreary sax tail-end. *There Will Always Be A You* is a Summer-ballad, not her classiest effort, but even so, she still makes most other female singers sound redundant in the soul-voice dept.

Linda Ronstadt - How Do I Make You/Rambler Gambler (Asylum): In which the world's top-earning AOR female artist takes a sniff of the amphetamine beat of new wave rock and comes up proving, yeah, she *can* sing fast and hard (but never rough and raw), and yes, the song has a sharp hookline and the guitars have a nice synchromeshed, fuzzy roar. But really, her forte still remains songs where she has room to stretch her voice to its liquid limits, as on the *Rambler Gambler* traditional ballad.

The Blitz Brothers - Gloria/ Songs Records (Vertigo): Most bands find a live version of Van Morrison's *Gloria* never fails to get the social club up and dancing. But most don't make the mistake of trying to better Them's definitive '60s version in the studio. The Blitz Bros really shouldn't have either. Their version is truly awful. But the B-side, that's great! A beautifully arranged, fluidly sung, modern pop song, stamped with finesse and just made for humming along to.

Glenn Cardier - Expectations/ I Saved Annette From Drowning (Infinity): Glenn Cardier has a black sense of humour, plus sensitivity, and he was one of the few genuine original talents to emerge from the brief folk boom in Sydney in the early '70s. Now he's not only gone electric, he's gone *Elvis Costello! Expectations* has him bending his voice to a Costello-sneer and stomping through a Costello *Pump It Up* pisstake. *Annette*'s a fairly incomprehensible story of saving Annette from drowning. Nice, l-o-u-d backing though.

Peter Lillie - Peter Lillie & The Ego Ninja - Samurai Star/The Man from Brash's/Dangerman Theme (Missing Link): Satirical Pelaco Bros pensman pops up here with a true collectors' item. Still a bit too mentally crooked for the Hit Parade, but heading there. *The Man From Brash's* features the actual Phil Manning on his stereo guitar and is rock/poetry classic material. All very listenable.

IMPORT SINGLES

Magazine - A Song from Under The Floorboards/20 Years Ago (Virgin): There are bands who work with beats and bands who work with moods. Magazine is a band who, at their height, use both trace elements in a glory rush of tangled synthesisers, metronome beats, snarled vocals and torturous, near chaotic arrangements. To describe, however, is to confuse, because like early Roxy Music, Magazine are less a formulation, more a rush of feeling that either picks you up or leaves you mired in a dirge. *Floorboards* and *20 Years* are prime Magazine. Back to the glory days of feeling like *Procession* on the first album, and showing no traces of the turgid uncertainty of their second album, *Secondhand Daylight*. You'll never know what you feel until you try.

Skids - Working For The Yankee Dollar/Vanguard's Crusade (Virgin): Beautiful production, great stomping, rousing chorus. If you can imagine original Punk passion fused with fulsome streamlined precision production, you're getting close to Skids territory. *Crusade* is, by comparison, a sparser and messier effort.

Cowboys International - Today Today/Fixation (Virgin): The sort of majestic, rolling, sonorous monologue thingie Bowie pulled off on the title track of *"Heroes"*. *Fixation* continues the love affair with a rewrite *Joe The Lion*. If the queue behind Bowie is going to stretch around the block, may we suggest it's time to plunder someone else. (No one plunders better than Bowie himself, anyway, and if people keep plundering him, there'll soon be no one left for *him* to plunder).

Peter Gabriel - Games Without Frontiers/The Start I Don't Remember (Charisma): The innovative ex-Genesis singer has always followed a blueprint the rest of us have never seen. If he ever did an album of *Solsbury Hill*s he'd probably be higher in the charts than his ex-group. As it is, he's in permanent left-field, making quirky yet compulsive music that repays concentration with pure pleasure. The burbling, skipping synthesiser rhythms of *Games* and the murky dirge of *Don't Remember* are cases in point.

Holly And The Italians - Tell That Girl To Shut Up/Chapel Of Love (Oval): Neato buzzsaw guitars, dancing beat and an upfront girl singer. In 1976 it would have been revolutionary. These days it's a good enough example of good modern sound. Lotsa rush, very few dynamics.

FLIX

Diane Keaton and Woody Allen snickering at Art in "Manhattan".

MANHATTAN

Directed by: Woody Allen
Starring: Woody Allen, Diane Keaton

Manhattan is, in many ways, a restatement of the thematic concerns of *Annie Hall* only with much less charm and hefty bonus helpings of Woody Allen's favourite celluloid seasonings - paranoia, acute inferiority and at least half a dozen other sundry complexes that you'd expect from a five foot, weedy, bespectacled paranoiac from a persecuted minority religion. In fact with this arty monument to neurotic relationships within the urban rat-trap context, Allen overtakes Elvis Costello in the best angst-actor award stakes. As with all the other Woody Allen movies (apart from the catatonic *Interiors*) his ever present guilt/anxiety motif is rendered palatable by an entertaining script laced shrewdly with thoughtful, satirical humour. The film provides a wealth of high-brow one-liners and literary in-joke repartee (the odd reference to Kafka and Dostoyevsky etc.) for sophisticated elements of the audience to chuckle wisely over, and wish they'd said *that* at last week's cocktail party or theatre opening night. In many ways *Manhattan* is for the 30 to 45 age group what *Life Of Brian* is to the 18 to 25 set.

Whilst the core of the film is based around an exploration of the neurotic knots of relationships and the myth of romance, *Manhattan* is also a love-hate treatment of trendy New York pseudo-intellectuals. Allen is brilliantly precise as he pins down, one by one, the pretentious foibles and mannerisms of world-weary social butterflies. There's a self-conscious, culture-vulture scene in which the names of exotic artists and poets are bandied around with convincing aplomb while classical music plays in the background and everyone sips chilled white wine on a sunny Sunday afternoon. (See Lindeman's TV ads for more details). Amongst these ageing trendies the quality of man-woman relationships is not defined by affection and good times, but by the depth and complication of conversational patter (the elusive 'heavy relationship'), and the latest Me-Generation demands, (ie embracing catch-phrase attitudes like 'be kin to

yourself', 'don't say yes when you want to say no', 'open relationships' and other self-indulgent cliches). Woody Allen in the persona of Isaac Davis, a TV comic writer, (which happened to be Allen's real-life livelihood before breaking into films), ruthlessly slags the middle class voyeurs, but the irony is that it is his own social class and lifestyle that he is masochistically lampooning.

In a markedly different performance from her cute, zany *Annie Hall* role, Diane Keaton portrays Mary, a journalist who gets involved in a lovers' triangle situation with Isaac and a married friend. This time around Allen's perennial leading lady seems as worn and shop-soiled as all the rest of the characters; Annie's endearing innocence and zest are absent, and, paradoxically, the more Mary reiterates the line 'I'm beautiful and intelligent' the less she radiates these qualities. Keaton's acting can't be faulted and, in a role that could well have resulted in a second rate *Annie Hall* reproduction, she lends her part a skilful element of credibility. It is teenager Mariel Hemingway's task in this film to provide the counterpoint to the rest of the cast's neurotic entanglements and manipulations. She argues the case for honest simplistic relationships based on, to paraphrase her own words, 'having good times together, making one another laugh and enjoying good sex', albeit nonchalantly glossing over the boredom, stifling possessiveness et al that ultimately bog down so many relationships. In the film's climax Isaac suddenly realises that this love is of a finer quality than Keaton's more sophisticated offering. A cynic might note at this juncture that, as Mary has just dumped Isaac anyway, this explains his swift reassessment of the nubile Mariel's positive qualities. The 43 year old Isaac is a geriatric sap who is pathetically eluding a crisis in his relationships, but there seems little hope he can escape recurrences of the same old disease. Problem is, Allen's handling of Isaac's escapist situation doesn't draw these factors forth and one is left with the unsettling impression that love is a many splendoured thing/love will find a way/this is not puppy love, and other song titles.

All in all *Manhattan* is Woody Allen's most interesting, most flawed work to date. The film sticks its neck out thematically, tends to ramble in patches and occasionally becomes bogged down in maudlin excess, but the sum total emerges as intelligent entertaining cinema.

Harry Kolotas

NORTH DALLAS FORTY

Direction: Ted Kotcheff
Starring: Nick Nolte, Mac Davis, Dayle Haddon

When you're getting old, getting grey *and* you're playing American Pro Football (better known here as Gridiron, to distinguish it from Rugby League and Aussie Rules), you're getting ripped apart and underpaid for the job. This is evident in the opening scenes of *North Dallas Forty* as ol' Nick Nolte climbs out of bed the morning after a game. The glory and adrenalin rush of bone-crunching muscle-tearing body contact is flashed back to as a high tension contrast during a long, agonising scene of Nolte grinding his vertebrae back to their approximately correct positions. Gawd, you can feel the ripple of sympathetic pain run through the audience.

Sympathy is something Nolte's football character, Phil Elliott, can use. The coach thinks he's a smartarse who's too old and not "team-spirited" enough for the job of wide receiver. Phil can't get involved in the "I kill for my team each Saturday" dedication of lunkheads like Jo Bob Priddy (Bo Svenson). And he's getting tired of being beat up every weekend. He's getting bored with football groupies, easy lays. He meets Charlotte (Dayle Haddon), an actual intelligent, sensitive female who, naturally enough, is horrified at what Phil is having done to him every week. But there's something about that ol' glory touchdown that keeps him coming back for more. The team is a tax loss for a snake-eyed conglomerate owner; the head coach rates a computer printout higher than the human spirit; Elliot has to take crap from these people and come back for more. But even that can't take the enjoyment out of those few moments where everything goes right, where he leaps unopposed in the air and the ball glides into his hands for a glory touchdown. The question implicit in *North Dallas Forty* is, when does the crap and corruption and brutality of professional sport become too heavy to be outweighed by those fleeting moments of glory.

The obvious return question is, do they ever? If you're going to be sensible about it, professional football has even fewer successful survivors than rock'n'roll. But with Nolte as the paunching, punchy, cocky Elliott, and with country singer Mac Davis (he had the hit version of Kevin Johnson's *Rock'n'Roll I Gave You The Best Years Of My Life* in America) as Elliott's sidekick Maxwell, you get a sense of what makes it all worthwhile to be an ageing player in a losing position, in a brutal game.

The mechanics of the American football game are not easily understandable, but, like Richard Harris' performance as a Rugby League player on a downhill ride in *This Sporting Life* back in the mid-'60s, Nolte in *North Dallas Forty* transcends the particular trappings and markings on any playing field. *Dallas* is, natch, all about modern gladiators, a profession which, in Roman times, was mostly reserved as a last ditch stand for slaves, but which today makes, mostly briefly, slaves out of athletes who are only too willing to accumulate longterm scars for short term money and the roar of the crowd.

Anyone for tennis?

Anthony O'Grady

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tours

Mi-sex
March
22 Manly Vale
23 Brighton Hotel
25 Tamworth Workers
26 Plantation Hotel Coffs
27 Lismore RSL
28 Surf Air Coolongatta
29 Playroom Gold Coast
30 Easts Leagues Bris
31 Sth Grafton RSL

Class
March
22 Railway Hotel
23 Auburn Soccer Club
25 Ambassador N'castle
26 Enfield Boulevard
29 Sylvania Hotel
30 Auburn Soccer Club
April
1 Ambassador N'castle
2 Astra Bondi

F—F—F Falcon
Fanatic Frolic
Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons
April
1 Armadale Hotel Melb
2 Martinis Melb
3 Macy's Melb

Ray Arnott & the Rude Dudes
March
22 Fairfield Hotel
23 Ainslie Hotel C'berra
April
1 Strata

Streetlevel
March
22 Swansea Workers
26 Comb n' Cutter
28 Railway Hotel
29 Caringbah Inn
April
2 Vicar of Wakefield
3 Dandaloo Hotel Dapto

Angels
March
22 Highway Hotel Wentworthville
23 Nth Subs Leagues W'gong

Flowers
March
22 Crystal Ballroom Melb
23 Macy's Melb
26 Florida Hotel Terrigal
April
4 Bondi Lifesaver

Mental as Anything
March
26 San Miguel Inn
27 Jolly Frog Windsor
28 Syd Uni
29 Stardust Hotel
31 Bexley Nth
April
1 ANU C'berra
2 Riverina CAE Wagga
4 Arkaba Adel

Loaded Dice
March
22 Strata
26 Syd Uni
28 Brighton Hotel
29 Selinas
31 Mt Pleasant Sports
April
1 ANU C'berra
4 Brighton Hotel

Outline
March
22 Selinas
24 Sefton Hotel
26 Civic
28 Bayview Tav
29 Governors Pleasure
30 Astra Bondi
April
2 Civic

Dalimore
March
22 Royal Antler (early) Stagedoor Tav (late)
23 Penrith Leagues
24 Mt Pleasant Sports
26 Florida Hotel Terrigal
27 Vicar of Wakefield
28 Bexley Nth
29 Railway Hotel
30 Bondi Lifesaver
April
3 Jolly Frog Windsor
4 Manly Vale

Hands Off
March
22 Manly Vale
23 Padstow Pk Hotel
27 Vicar of Wakefield
28 Sylvania Hotel
29 Family Inn
April
3 Jolly Frog Windsor
4 Manly Vale Hotel

Matt Finish
March
22 Selinas
24 Civic
26 Comb n' Cutter
28 Manly Vale (early) Rock Garden
29 Capitol Theatre
Fairfield Hotel (late)
31 Civic
April
1 Paddington Green
3 Stagedoor Tav

Kevin Borich
March
22 Sandown Pk Hotel Melb
23 Melb Uni
April
1 Family Inn
2 Florida Hotel Terrigal
3 Rubbers Drummoyne
4 Manly Vale

Radiators
March
22 Matthew Flinders Melb
Bombay Rock (late)
23 Hordern Pavilion
24 Festival Hall Bris
26 Comb n' Cutter
27 Vicar of Wakefield
28 Sylvania Hotel
29 Capitol Theatre
30 Swansea Workers
April
3 Playroom Gold Coast

Rose Tattoo
March
22 Bondi Lifesaver
23 Swansea Workers
April
4 Bondi Lifesaver

Ward 13
March
22 Manly Vale
23 Avalon RSL
26 Comb n' Cutter
27 Strata
28 Metropol
29 Bexley Nth
April
1 Padstow Pk Hotel
2 Florida Hotel Terrigal
3 Metropol

The Imports
March
22 Sylvania Hotel
27 Astra Bondi
28 Family Inn
29 Sylvania Hotel

Cyril B Bunter & Dutch Tilders
March
22 Sandringham Hotel Melb
23 Melb Uni
25 Rmit Fun Factory (arvo)
Eureka Hotel Geelong
26 Central Club Richmond
27 Newmarket Hotel Bendigo
28 Swinbourne Tech
29 Station Hotel (arvo)
Pier Hotel (nite)
30 Poynters Carlton Club

Split Enz & The Sports
March
23 Adel Thebarton Town Hall
25 Wagga
26 Bathurst Civic Centre
27 Syd Capitol Theatre
28 Goulburn Workers Club
29 C'berra Theatre
April
1 Armidale
2Coffs Harbour Plantation Hotel

Radio Active
March
22 Royal Antler
23 Padstow Pk Hotel
24 Sundowner Hotel
26 Ambassador N'castle
27 Studs
28 Manly Vale Hotel (early)
Bondi Lifesaver (late)

Skyhooks
March
25 Ainslie Hotel C'berra
26 Ambassador N'castle
27 Sylvania Hotel
28 Rubbers Drummoyne
29 Bexley Nth
30 Bondi Lifesaver

Lonely Hearts
March
28 Stagedoor Tav
29 Caringbah Inn
30 W'gong Leagues
April
3 War n' Peace

Russell Morris
March
26 Dapto Leagues
27 Sylvania Hotel
28 Family Inn (early)
Bondi Lifesaver(late)

Mother Goose
March
24 Bexley Nth
26 Waratah Mayfield RSL
28 Sth Syd Seniors
29 Sylvania Hotel
30 Penrith Leagues

Toy Love
March
22 Strata
24 Frenchs
25 Civic
26 Syd Uni (arvo)
Astra (nite)
28 Fairfield Hotel
29 Metropol Tav
April
1 Civic
2 Stagedoor Tav
3 Royal Hotel Sutherland (early)
Sylvania Hotel (late)

The Hitmen
March
22 Metropol Tav
26 NSW Uni (arvo)
N'castle Uni (nite)
28 Fairfield Hotel
29 Royal Antler
April
3 Strata

Numbers
March
22 Bondi Lifesaver
24 Matraville High
25 Civic
26 N'castle Uni
27 P'matta High (arvo)
Bondi Lifesaver (nite)
28 Strata
29 Metropol Tav
April
1 Civic
3 Bondi Lifesaver

In-X-S
March
22 Pickled Parrot
26 N'castle Uni
27 Governors Pleasure
28 Syd Uni
29 Pickled Parrot
30 Bondi Lifesaver
31 Bexley Nth
April
1 Family Inn
2 Comb n' Cutter (early)
Stagedoor Tav (late)
3 Governors Pleasure
4 Bondi Lifesaver (early)
Caringbah Inn (late)

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3 DONCASTER INN,	11 CROXTON PARK,			19 GOULBURN,		26 PORT KEMBLA,	
5 SANDOWN PARK,	12 KINGSTON ROCK,			20 WAGGA,		28 NEWCASTLE,	
6 PIER HOTEL,	13 FERNTREE GULLY,			21 ALBURY,		29 NEWCASTLE,	
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